

Arab leaders wish King speedy recovery

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Friday received phonecalls from leaders of Arab states inquiring about his health and wishing him a speedy recovery. The King received a phonecall from Saudi King Fahd Ben Abdul Aziz, Sultan Qaboos Ben Saeed of Oman and Bahraini Emir Sheikh Isa Ben Salman Al Khalifeh. King Hussein also received phonecalls from Saudi Second Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Prince Sultan Ben Abdul Aziz. Cables from senior Arab officials and personalities were sent to the Royal Court wishing King Hussein good health and speedy recovery.

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U.N. rights panel condemns Israeli interrogation methods

GENEVA (AP) — A U.N. panel of human rights experts on Friday condemned Israel's interrogation techniques and urged it to respect international human rights norms in the occupied territories.

The committee of 18 independent experts said discrimination against Arabs, bedouin people and women should be ended.

It said it remained concerned that prisoners can be kept in custody for long periods without trial.

The committee's chairwoman, Christine Chanet, said condemnation wasn't too strong a term to characterise the committee's opinion of Israel's use of band-cuffing, hooding, shaking and other physical force in interrogating suspected ter-

rorists. "It's a violation of the covenant," Ms. Chanet said.

Israel has acknowledged it is using such methods, but has said most are necessary to extract information that could prevent attacks on Israelis by Palestinian militants.

The committee was publishing the conclusions of its two-day examination of Israel's first report on its implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which the country ratified in 1991.

While containing four paragraphs of "positive factors," the document listed more than seven pages of concerns and recommendations.

The committee acknowl-

edged Israel's security concerns and problems linked to its occupation of territories affected the covenant's implementation.

Members welcomed the government's efforts to address questions of police violence and to review complaints of alleged mistreatment of civilians by members of the police and security forces.

But they expressed deep concern that Israel "continues to deny its responsibility" to fully apply the covenant in the occupied territories, which they define as the West Bank, Gaza Strip and other areas where they say the Israelis exercise effective control.

The committee's report said it "is concerned that Palestinians in the occupied

territories who remain under the control of Israeli security forces don't enjoy the same rights and freedoms as Jewish settlers."

It urged Israel to take immediate steps to end discriminatory practices.

The committee criticised the lack of information in Israel's report about the human rights situation in the occupied territories.

It expressed concern about Israeli security forces' use of rubber-covered metal bullets to disperse demonstrations in the occupied territories.

The committee requested information from Israel about the number of people killed by the bullets, the number of complaints about their use and the number of security person-

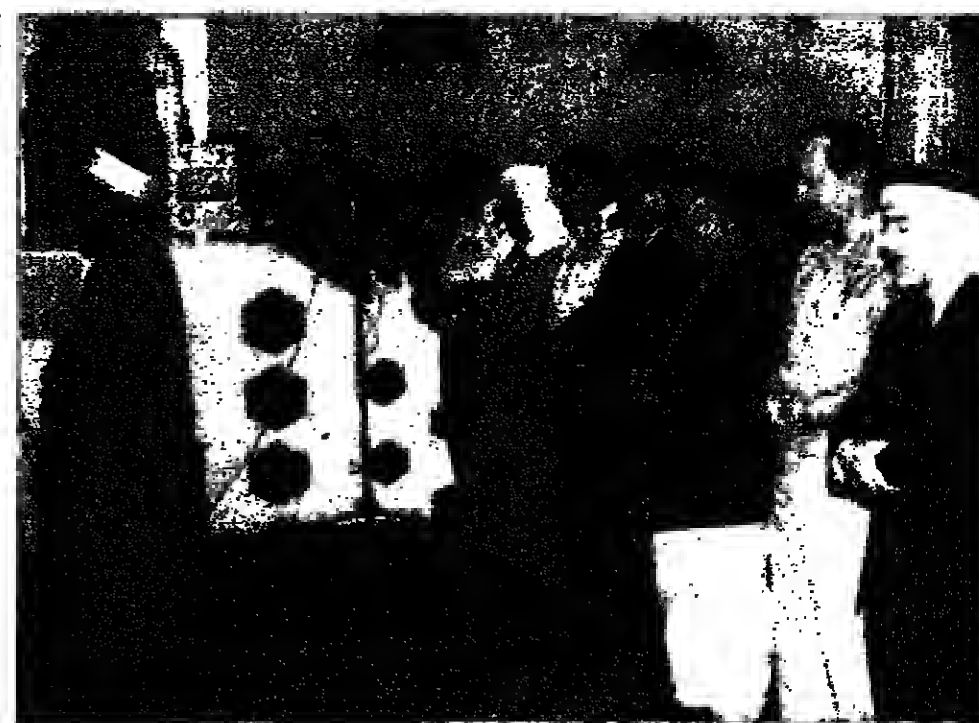
nel punished as a result.

Israel contends that measures criticised by the panel are required to maintain national security.

"Agonising dilemmas arise in trying to balance certain provisions of the covenant with a government's primary responsibility to protect the lives of its citizens," the Israeli mission to U.N. offices in Geneva said in a statement.

The Israeli statement said the covenant doesn't apply in the occupied territories because the Palestinian National Authority has assumed responsibility for more than 95 per cent of Palestinians there.

Where Israel is responsible, "it applies the relevant principles of humanitarian law," the statement said.



PRAYING FOR KING'S RECOVERY: His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, performs Friday prayers at the Royal Air Force Mosque. The mufti of the Armed Forces dedicated the prayers to the recovery and safe return of His Majesty King Hussein. Also performing the prayers were Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Abbadi, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff Field Marshal Abdul Hafez Mirai Kaabneh and senior Armed Forces officers.

Arafat wins Turkish support on occupied Jerusalem

ANKARA (R) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat said Friday he had won Turkish help to resist Israeli bids to "Judaize" the Holy City of occupied Jerusalem.

"I would like to thank Turkey for her efforts to support measures to prevent the Judaification of Jerusalem," Mr. Arafat told a news conference in Ankara after meeting Turkish President Suleyman Demirel.

"Mr. Arafat passed on his great concerns over the Judaification of Jerusalem... We share those concerns. Our support for the Palestinian people is total and will continue to be so," Mr. Demirel said.

Mr. Arafat urged overwhelmingly Muslim Turkey to back the decisions of the Jerusalem Committee which met in Morocco this week and called for the mobilisation of the Islamic World against what he called Israel's expansionist policy.

Earlier this year, the Israeli government decided to extend the limits of the municipality of occupied Jerusalem, a move which boosted the Jewish population of the city.

"The peace process has reached a dead end as a result of the policies being carried out by Israel," Mr. Arafat said.

Israel occupied Arab east Jerusalem in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war and later annexed it, vowing the united city will remain its "eternal and indivisible" capital. Palestinians want Arab east Jerusalem to be the capital of a future state.

"Israel has played a heavy role in the failure of the peace process with its policies in Jerusalem," Mr. Demirel said.

Turkey has drawn the anger of Arab countries and neighbouring Iran for its growing defence cooperation with Israel. Israeli airforce jets are permitted to train in Turkey, while Turkish fighter planes are being modernised by Israel.

Officials close to the talks said Mr. Arafat had urged Turkey to use its influence on Israel to halt Jewish settlement in occupied Jerusalem and the West Bank.

"We believe Turkey will continue to support the realisation of the peace process. We need this support even more now," Mr. Arafat said.

Talks between Israel and the Palestinians this week failed to break 16 months of deadlock in the stalled peace process.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has resisted an American plan for reviving peacemaking which calls on Israel to withdraw from another 13 per cent of the West Bank. Mr. Arafat has accepted the plan.

Security Council renews UNIFIL for six more months

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The Security Council on Thursday approved a six-month renewal, until Jan. 31, of the 4,500-member U.N. Interim Force In Lebanon (UNIFIL) in a resolution adopted unanimously and without debate.

The force was established in 1978 to restore the Lebanese government's authority over the southern part of the country after an Israeli incursion against Palestinian activists.

Israel withdrew its troops following a later 1982 invasion but continued to occupy a so-called security zone along the Lebanese side of the border, aided by its allies of the South Lebanon Army militia.

This has resulted in frequent clashes, mainly with Hizbollah, and also prevents the deployment of UNIFIL up to the international border.

UNIFIL now comprises troops from Fiji, Finland, France, Ghana, Ireland, Italy, Nepal, Norway and Poland. It is commanded by Major General Jijji Konousi Konrote of Fiji.

In his latest report on UNIFIL, Secretary-General Kofi Annan said the number of operations conducted by guerrillas in the

last six months had increased by 40 per cent compared to the previous six months.

He said the most of the 348 excursions were carried out by Hizbollah against Israeli forces in the countries, using small arms, mortars, rocket-propelled grenades and anti-tank missiles.

In turn Israeli troops expended 10,000 rounds of artillery, mortar, tanks and missiles, about the same as last year. About 58 air raids were carried out against targets north of the Litani River and the Israeli navy patrolled Lebanese territorial water and imposed restrictions on local fishermen in the country, Mr. Annan's report said.

As on previous occasions, the renewal resolution reiterated strong support for the "territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon" within its internationally recognised boundaries. The UNIFIL operation is short \$103.5 million, Mr. Annan said.

Norway, a mainstay of the force, is expected to withdraw most of its 600 troops with Italy and Spain having been asked to replace them.

Regent calls on young Arab leaders to focus on human dignity in decision making

By Francesca Ciriaci
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Thursday called on young leaders to focus on the human dimension and human dignity in decision-making and to develop real dialogue to emphasise commonalities and enhance respect for differences.

He launched a special appeal to the future Arab leaders to use their shared

heritage in order to strengthen Arab identity and make the Arab Nation a more active player on international, regional, and world fora.

Urging future generations of Arab leaders to "stop internalising" their countries' problems and pursue an "Arab discourse" instead, he said: "Let me remind you that there are tens of regional institutions in Europe. We have the Arab League with 15 financially ailing organisa-

tions... and we have the Organisation of the Islamic Conference.

"I hope we will use our shared religious values and shared language to build a better future."

The Regent, who was addressing participants in the second United Nations University International Leadership Academy (UNU/ILA) programme, outlined the skills and approaches

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Russia knocks U.S., U.K. for nixing Iraq resolution

MOSCOW (R) — Russia criticised the United States and Britain on Friday for blocking a U.N. resolution saying Iraq had complied with demands to destroy its nuclear arms facilities.

Russia introduced the resolution on Wednesday. France and China had supported the motion, but the United States and Britain opposed it.

"Unfortunately, because of the firm position of the United States and Britain, none of the proposed drafts was adopted, although no convincing arguments were presented," Russian For-

eign Ministry spokesman Vladimir Rakhmanin told a briefing.

The measure would have moved the Security Council one step closer to shutting the file on investigations of Iraq's nuclear programme, although investigations of missile technology and chemical and biological weapons would still be needed before sanctions in place since the Gulf war can be lifted.

"We continue to believe that there are no grounds for further delay in the closure of the nuclear file," Mr. Rakhmanin said.

"Such a decision would encourage Iraq to seek further cooperation with the U.N. and would make it possible to speed up work to close other disarmament files: missile, chemical and biological," he said.

"After this the U.N. Security Council will have to consider lifting the oil embargo on Iraq. We hope that this could be done in October."

Iraqi leaders issued a fresh warning to the United Nations on Thursday vowing to take swift but unspecified measures if the sanctions were not lifted.

Democracy, media setback in Arab-Muslim World

By Paul Taylor, Diplomatic Editor
Reuters

LONDON — Democracy and media freedom are under assault in many parts of the Middle East as governments, beset by deadlock in Arab-Israel peace efforts and a slump in oil prices, seek to keep a lid on opposition.

From Cairo to Amman, from Ankara to Beirut, rulers anxious to fend off challenges from radical Islamists, or in some cases to silence allegations of corruption, are restricting political activity or freedom of expression.

With notable exceptions such as Morocco and Iran, which are experimenting with greater pluralism, the timid democratisation that began in some corners of the Arab and Muslim World at the turn of the 1990s is in retreat, civil rights campaigners say.

The Middle East has long been one of the most repressive regions of the world as regards freedom of

expression, human rights and democracy," said Robert Menard, president of the press freedom watchdog Reporters sans Frontieres.

"There was progress in recent years in countries such as Egypt and Jordan but now we are in a period of regression again," he said in a telephone interview.

In the last 12 months, Egypt has restricted the publication of independent newspapers. Jordan has banned more than a dozen publications and is seeking to enact a restrictive press law.

Algeria, where the army halted an experiment in democracy in 1992 to thwart an Islamist victory, has further tightened censorship on press reports of its ruthless civil war against Islamist guerrillas.

Lebanon, whose vigorous media avoid criticism of Syria, the dominant power in the fragile country, has barred private television stations from broadcasting by satellite.

Turkey has outlawed the main

Islamist Welfare Party and arrested dozens of journalists accused of supporting either the Islamists or Kurdish separatists. Human rights campaigners say several of them have been tortured in detention.

Role of the West, and U.S. in particular

Egyptian civil liberties campaigners blame a crackdown on independent newspapers there partly on Western neglect. Negad Al Borai, director of the Cairo-based Group for Democratic Development, told Reuters the waning influence of the United States in the Middle East was the main reason for the latest crackdowns on the press in Egypt, Kuwait, Jordan and the Palestinian territories.

The lack of U.S. interest, he argues, sent a message to unelected Arab governments that they can take back the little freedom they conceded to the press under Western pressure.

"The U.S. feels that almost all of its interests in the region including oil and a military presence have been achieved."

With the exception of the peace process there is no reason for the West to pressure Arab leaders to commit themselves to democracy," Borai said.

Borai said the government's press crackdown was driven by a desire to avert scrutiny of corruption which he said was growing hand-in-hand with the liberalisation of the economy.

"The government does not want this corruption to be exposed at this stage hence the recent crackdown on the press."

President Hosni Mubarak's government has a monopoly on radio and television and owns the three main national newspapers.

Egyptian officials argue that tighter control on the media is necessary to combat the threat to Mubarak's rule from Islamic fundamentalists who assassinated his pre-

decessor, Anwar Sadat, the author of Egypt's peace treaty with Israel.

Palestinian journalists have also fallen foul of President Yasser Arafat for reporting on the activities of Islamic Hamas guerrillas and on allegations of corruption against the Palestinian Authority.

Reporters sans Frontieres said Arafat's office, citing national security, also ordered the media to play down pro-Iraqi demonstrations by Palestinians during the crisis between Iraq and the United Nations in February.

Jordanian newspapers have traditionally been freer than most of their Arab counterparts. But the government's draft press law includes sweeping bans on coverage deemed harmful to national security or economic stability, offensive to King Hussein or to Jordan's neighbours. It would increase fines for offenders and set stiff capital requirements on newspapers.

The U.S. group Human Rights Watch said the law would impose a

"daunting regime of censorship." Officials say the law aims to clamp down on what they see as irresponsible weekly newspapers.

Analysts and diplomats said the government wanted to stifle dissent over Jordan's 1994 peace treaty with Israel, fuelled by an Israeli assassination bid on a Palestinian Islamic militant in Amman last year, and anger among Jordanians, many of Palestinian origin, over the Jewish state's minimal concessions to Palestinian self-rule demands.

It also sought to avert unrest due to poverty, an economic slowdown and sympathy for neighbouring Iraq, they said.

Jordan's main opposition parties, led by the Islamic Action Front, boycotted last November's parliamentary election in protest at campaign rules.

Turkey's powerful armed forces, and its courts, have clamped down

in the last year on political Islam and Kurdish separatism to uphold founding father Kemal Ataturk's principles of secularism and the unity of all people within Turkey's borders.

The constitutional court in January outlawed the Islam-based Welfare Party for attempting to subvert the secularist constitution. Its leader Necmettin Erbakan was removed from parliament and barred from political activity for five years.

The military issued statements in March and July raising pressure on the government to enact anti-Islamist legislation.

Leaders of the main Kurdish party have been arrested and charged with links to armed Kurdish rebels.

Self censorship

Publishers in the conservative

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Amnesty commends U.N. stance on Algeria

AMMAN (J.T.) — Amnesty International said that it shares the grave concerns about the human rights situation in Algeria, expressed by the U.N. Human Rights Committee in its conclusions announced Friday, and welcomes the committee's recommendations.

"For the first time a U.N. mechanism, in expressing its concern about the serious human rights crisis, has issued concrete recommendations to the Algerian government for measures it should take to stop and prevent grave violations," Amnesty International said in a statement to the press.

populations living the loss of innocent lives, and a general responsibility of the State to reestablish and on the conditions necessary for the enjoyment and protection of fundamental rights and freedoms in Algeria."

In conclusion the committee urged the Algerian authorities to take effective measures to:

— prevent massacres and attacks against the civilian population and, if they nevertheless occur, to come promptly to the defence of the population;

— ensure that proper investigations are conducted by independent bodies to determine who the offenders are and to bring them to justice, and all cases of massacres to be investigated;

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Israeli-allied militiaman killed in roadside bomb

MARJAYOUN (AP) — A roadside bomb exploded in southern Lebanon Friday, killing a pro-Israeli militiaman and injuring his seven-year-old sister, Lebanese security officials said. The bomb, apparently detonated by remote control, went off on a road outside the town of Jezzine in the Israeli-occupied zone, officials said on condition of anonymity. Nabil Iskandar, a member of the South Lebanon Army, was killed instantly while at the wheel of his pickup truck, the officials said. His 12-year-old sister Salam, who was sitting next to him, was wounded, the officials added. She is being treated at a nearby hospital. Jezzine is 20 kilometers north of Marjayoun, the biggest town in the occupied sector and is run by the Israeli-backed SLA, which patrols the zone with Israeli soldiers.

Arab League chief to fly to Libya for Lockerbie talks

CAIRO (AP) — Arab League chief Esmat Abdul Meguid is to fly to Tripoli Sunday, after seeking U.N. authorization, for talks on the Lockerbie bombing at the centre of sanctions against Libya, an Arab League official said. He said the secretary general of the Cairo-based League was to meet Libyan President Muammar Qaddafi during his four-day visit to discuss the new developments in the Lockerbie affair. Washington and London indicated last week they would agree to two Libyans wanted for the 1988 mid-air bombing of a Pan Am Boeing 747 over the Scottish village of Lockerbie being tried in a third country, though under Scottish law. Libya has been under a U.N. air traffic embargo and other sanctions since 1992 over its refusal to surrender the two suspects in the bombing, which cost 270 lives, for trial in the United States or Britain. Before last week, Washington and London had rejected Libyan offers of holding a trial in a third country. Mr. Abdul Meguid has welcomed the new stand and sent a message to U.N. chief Kofi Annan offering the Arab League's cooperation with the United Nations to resolve the Lockerbie affair and have sanctions lifted against Libya.

Torrential rains in Sudan leave 14 dead, hundreds homeless

KHARTOUM (AP) — Water from a dam breached by torrential rains flooded a village in western Sudan, killing 14 people and leaving 450 families homeless, a newspaper reported Friday. The Sudda village in Darfur state was under one metre water after the flood Thursday, the government's Al Anwar said. It did not elaborate on the number of homeless, but seven people in family is not unusual in rural Sudan. The government declared a state of emergency in Darfur and will distribute food and medical aid to the victims, it said. Earlier this week, torrential rains destroyed 1,000 homes in the town of Fashir, also in Darfur. No casualty figures were available.

Body parts found in Cairo bus stop

CAIRO (AP) — A man's legs, arms and entrails were found stuffed in five sacks at a crowded Cairo bus stop, police said Friday. The bags were discovered Thursday by rush hour commuters at the Abu Al Reesh bus stop in a medieval Islamic neighbourhood, police said, speaking on customary condition of anonymity. Forensic experts are examining the body parts to identify the man, whose head and chest were missing. The torso had been hacked in half and only the abdomen containing the intestines and the stomach was found in the sacks. Egypt witnessed a wave of similar murder a decade ago by wives who were victims of rape, beatings and other abuse by their husbands. The victims' mutilated bodies and body parts were disposed off in plastic bags.

Arab youths beat up 10 Israeli soldiers

HAIFA (AP) — Arab youths beat up 10 Israeli soldiers on the beach in the northern town of Haifa, in an incident seen by Israeli police as a "national disgrace," a newspaper said Friday. A fight which broke out Tuesday on a Haifa beach was initially covered up by Israeli police. One policeman described the soldiers as "a bunch of weaklings who discredited the army," the weekly Kolbo reported. The 10 soldiers, who were unarmed, got into a confrontation with the four Arab youths who hit them with bottles. Three of the Israelis were taken to hospital, while one Arab was slightly hurt. A spokesman for Haifa police, Moshe Nissan, denied any attempt to cover up the fight. "At first the attackers' identities were not known by the police. It was treated like a regular fight involving young people, without any reference to nationalities," he told the daily Haaretz.



ARAFAT IN TURKEY: Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Turkish President Suleyman Demirel listen to their national anthems during a welcoming ceremony for Mr. Arafat at Cankaya presidential palace in Ankara on Friday. Mr. Arafat arrived here for a one-day official visit to seek Ankara's support to get the Middle East peace process moving (see story on page 1) (AP photo)

Turkish allies mull anti-Islamist poll deal

ANKARA (R) — The coalition partners in Turkey's outgoing government are discussing forming an alliance to block the Islam-based Virtue Party at local elections next year, party leaders said in comments published on Friday.

"[Prime Minister] Mesut Yilmaz put this issue on the agenda," Hurriyet newspaper quoted Deputy Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit as saying. "I said I would like to see with my party's decision-making bodies." Parliament voted overwhelmingly on Thursday to hold both general and local elections next April 18 in line with a request from Mr. Yilmaz's minority government, struggling with its lack of support in parliament.

Mr. Ecevit said his Democratic Left Party and Mr. Yilmaz's conservative Motherland Party were considering presenting a single candidate in key cities in the local elections.

The Sahah daily said the

coalition's third partner, a small conservative grouping, could also join the pact.

The Islamists swept the last local polls in 1994, taking Ankara and Istanbul and dozens of other municipalities in their first major electoral success.

They went on to narrowly win a general election in 1995 but the secularist army forced Necmettin Erbakan, Turkey's first Islamist prime minister, from office last year, opening the way for Mr. Yilmaz to take power.

On Thursday night, shortly before parliament went into a two-month recess, deputies passed one of several anti-Islamist laws demanded by the army to bring the building of mosques under the control of a state-run religious body.

Mr. Yilmaz, struggling with a lack of parliamentary support, vowed some time ago to resign by the end of the year to make way for an "independent" prime minister to oversee the run-up to elections.

although the plan has been criticised by senior government figures as a recipe for further uncertainty.

Commentators predict the Islamists may take advantage of divisions among the secularist parties to do well at the next elections.

Both the secularist left and right are split into rival camps and the lack of a strong government since 1995 has allowed the army to increase its influence as the main barrier to the rise of political Islam.

"We are going into elections but the divisions remain. There have still been no changes in the electoral law or the status of the parties. Everyone is asking whether elections will bring stability," columnist Hasan Celal wrote in Sahah.

Turkish markets have paid little attention to the calling of the election. Stocks in Istanbul were up 0.52 per cent at midday on Friday.

Three people dead, 20 wounded in Algiers bomb attack

ALGIERS (AP) — A powerful bomb exploded Friday in a market in Algiers, killing three people and wounding 20 others.

It was the second deadly explosion in the capital in two days.

Authorities said the bomb, hidden in a crate of vegetables, exploded at a market near Kouba, in the southern outskirts of Algiers.

Nobody claimed responsibility for the attack, but such bombings are usually blamed



Marcel Khalifeh breathes life into Jerash Festival

By Munther Murjan
and Randa Naffa
Special to the Jordan Times

JERASH — Marcel Khalifeh sang for "all the Arabs" and shared some spiritual moments at the Jerash South Theatre Wednesday, reviving the status of Arab cultural song.

During the two-hour show, Khalifeh said he was able, through the occasion of the 17th Jerash Festival, to restore the lost sense of Arab nationalism.

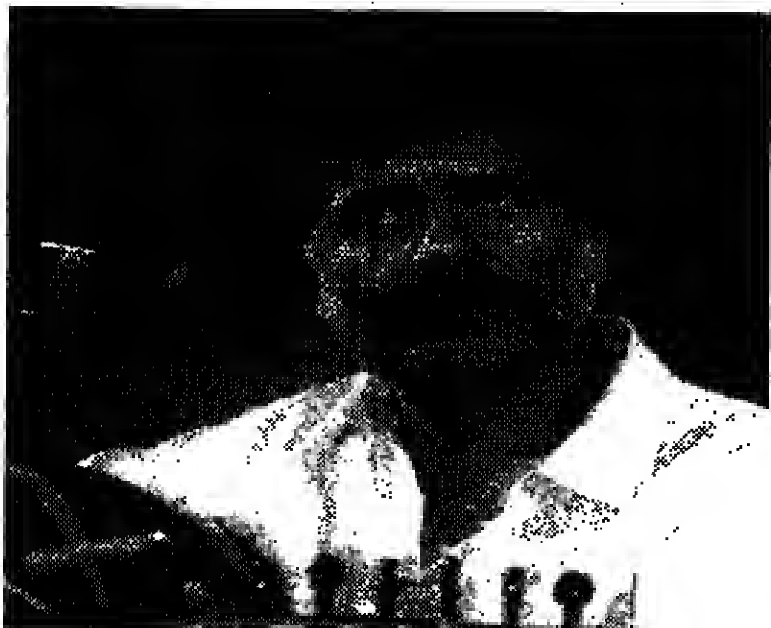
"The real celebrations of the Jerash Festival began today," said Akram Massarweh, General Director of the Jerash Festival, who expressed satisfaction at the enormous turnout, the largest of any event so far at this year's festival. Five thousand fans stormed the 7,000-seat theatre to hear Mr. Khalifeh's uplifting lyrics.

At a press conference earlier Mr. Khalifeh expressed hope that his performance would be "silent and peaceful."

Under the theme "A song in my mind," Mr. Khalifeh gave out an emotional performance described by some as a "mass prayer." The renowned singer is known not only for his voice but for his sentimental lyrics, which often described the sufferings of the Arab Nation.

"These words revive our national aspirations," said an Arab Israeli who attended the emotion-charged concert.

His passionate performance



Marcel Khalifeh at the Jerash South Theatre Wednesday (Photo by Yousef Allan)

touched the souls of the crowds who hailed from Iraq, Israel, the occupied territories and different parts of the Kingdom.

"His songs remind me of my father, a patriot who died in an Israeli prison fighting for the cause of [Palestine]," said one Arab Israeli woman.

"I drove all the way from Nazareth to listen to Marcel because his songs carry our history," said her husband.

Mr. Khalifeh opened his performance with "The Storm" — a piece that inspired the crowd to sing along even before the song

began. Excitement grew as the musical legend continued on to some of his most popular songs written by great Arab poets, such as Tawfiq Ziad.

Mr. Khalifeh is no stranger to the world of "political art." His songs are a revival of his past work which bear the sufferings of our Arab Nation, he said.

"I am just as oppressed as the rest of you, the Arab Nation is under siege facing all kinds of moral pollution," he added.

He addressed his songs to the suffering of all children in Iraq, Palestine and Lebanon brought

the audience to tears.

"I have always dreamed of this day," said one woman. "It is almost unbelievable."

Her sister added that, "If it wasn't for the political changes in the region, we wouldn't have been able to attend the festival."

Mr. Khalifeh was accompanied by only three other musicians — a violinist, a cellist and oudist — marking a change in the usual style of his performance.

"With less musicians I can communicate better with my audience," he said.

Mr. Khalifeh captured hearts not only with his music, but also with his charm and bold remarks.

He encouraged his audience to "feel free to say whatever you want to the Arab governments, since we are being broadcast live tonight."

"Let us send a message of solidarity to all the prisoners in enemy and Arab prisons," he said.

The young female artist Ummayma Al-Khalil used her voice to add a special emotional touch to this exceptional musical gathering. Her solo, "A bird looking from the window," made the audience sit still and allowed the song to sweep through their souls.

"Everything is perfect about this night," said a woman in the audience.

"The music, the words — Marcel is the singer," she concluded.

Crown Prince Hassan warns that 'latent energies' could be released if moderation in peace process fails

AMMAN (J.T.) — President of the Jordanian Institute of Diplomacy Kamel Abu Jaber addressed Wednesday the Wilton Park Conference on Peace and Stability in the Middle East on behalf of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the institute said in a press release Wednesday.

Professor Abu Jaber said the conference's theme is a reminder that the peace process must not be allowed to fail, and that in choosing to address the humanitarian dimension of peace, the conference was sharing Prince Hassan's approach to the same issue.

Dr. Abu Jaber said that reconciliation must start at home and should "commence within the self, bringing a gradual change of attitude from that of trauma and fear to that of acceptance of others and their differences."

At the same time, he reminded the audience of His Majesty King Hussein's tireless efforts in achieving peace and that Jordan's participation in the peace process emanates from an awareness that peace should be pursued with an eye on the future, rather than focusing on past injustices.

Dr. Abu Jaber emphasised that security is not limited to preparedness, but is also found "in that rationally ordered condition where neighbours behave in a neighbourly manner with

those around on an equal footing."

The peace process, to be sure, cannot see fruition without solving the questions of Jerusalem, the settlements, and the Palestinian refugees, among others.

Dr. Abu Jaber quoted Prince Hassan at the Conference on the Security Dilemma in the Era of Arab-Israeli Peace-Making, held by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy in September 1994.

"I think it is abundantly clear that the search for security in the Middle East will be futile if we do not focus sufficiently on the socio-economic areas of self-security," Prince Hassan said then.

"In fact, as we make progress along the path of peace, our ability to meet the military security challenges will become increasingly dependent on dealing effectively with those non-military components of security."

Peace, and the idea of peace, Dr. Abu Jaber pointed out, is a novelty in the region. People are neither used, nor attuned to it.

This is a consequence of factors such as the military imbalance, the traumatised adversaries — both Arabs and Jews — and the need to develop the region in an equitable way that will lessen income disparities.

Seven years following the

start of the Madrid Process, the regional situation is grim, he said. The silent stockpiling of arms in the region is a result of stalled peace negotiations, and is accompanied by two additional developments that may also have serious consequences: the increasingly diminished American role as a result of Israel's incessant efforts in that direction, and the Jewish state's current efforts to subject the redeployment of Israeli forces to a public referendum.

Professor Abu Jaber concluded by expressing skepticism about the situation, saying that "looking beyond the seemingly quiet Arab World, and listening to the silence, may tell a different story than what seems apparent."

"Latent energies may quickly be released with terrific force should moderation prove a failure."

The Biblical dimension emphasised by the Likud and its right-wing coalition partners, may yet escalate the conflict to the point of religious confrontation. That is why honourable and equitable peace, based on international law and U.N. resolutions, is the only viable alternative.

The conference was held at Wilton Park, U.K., from July 27-30.

Government goings-on

Hourani to discuss regional power grid

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Mohammad Saleh Hourani is in Tunis to participate in the ministerial meetings of the Arab Atomic Energy Commission due to open today. Dr. Hourani is expected to meet Egyptian counterpart Mohammad Alkashan to discuss the Egyptian-Jordanian project to link the two countries' national power grids, a project now nearing completion. They will also discuss the arrangements for the inaugural celebrations scheduled for October. The linkage is expected to save the two countries at least \$5 million a year. The project will eventually link the grids of Syria, Iraq, and Turkey. The Egyptian-Jordanian project was to have been inaugurated last December, but due to the collapse of a massive coal reef, the connecting cable running through the Red Sea was broken in February. The linkage between Syria and Iraq will become operational in the year 2000, while Iraq and Turkey are expected to be linked in the year 2002.

Jordan, Algeria conclude agreement

ALGIERS (Petra) — Jordan and Algeria concluded an agreement on cooperation in pharmaceutical production, medical services, and the exchange of medical expertise, according to a statement following Minister of Health and Medical Care Ashraf Kurdi's visit to Algeria. According to the statement, the two sides called for further integration of the Jordanian-Algerian pharmaceutical industry through joint projects and increased investment by the private and public sectors. The Algerian side renewed an offer to provide Jordan's pharmaceutical companies with raw materials for the manufacture of antibiotics, and called for the exchange of expertise and cooperation in control over the production, registration and distribution of pharmaceutical goods. Algerian officials requested an increase in the number of air flights between the two countries to assist the transfer of patients' files from Algeria to Jordan.

Gammo encourages investment in transport sector

AMMAN (J.T.) — Overland and maritime transport representatives in Jordan agreed Thursday to set up an overland transport port terminal in Amman to help organise transport operations. During a meeting of transport representatives, Minister of Transport and Telecommunications Sami Gammo called on private sector companies and financial institutions to participate in this vital project, which will cost JD10 million. The proposal calls for the creation of storage facilities, parking for trucks and accommodation services for truck drivers as well as maintenance facilities for vehicles. According to a statement, participants decided to create a committee of land and maritime transport representatives, truck owners unions, clearance companies, and representatives of the ministries of interior and customs. Participants recommended that a special mechanism be introduced to the maritime transport sector to register vessels to sail under the Jordanian flag. According to the statement, of Jordan's 23 vessels, eight sail under the flag.

First 'forum meeting' of governorate NGOs concludes

By Suha Ma'ayeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The first forum meeting of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) held in the Irbid governorate ended Tuesday, stressing the NGOs' necessary roles in social and economic and sustainable development.

The meeting also emphasised the need for greater coordination and exchange of opinions among these NGOs and the public sector on the national, regional and international levels.

The meeting was organised by the Jordanian-European Information, Training and Technological Support for NGOs (JETT) project, in cooperation with Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF), the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GIUVS) and the Directorate of Social Development at the Ministry of Social Development. It is the first in a series to be held in all governorates.

Michael Portken, president of Eurocom, a German NGO charity organisation founded in 1989, said the idea of the governorate-level meeting was to

bring together NGOs, public administrators and small and medium-sized enterprises at governorate level. "All the social problems of the governorates will not be solved if economic development [at this level] is not pursued," he said.

"NGOs could play a major part in this particular developmental sector, but this only happens when communication among different sectors exists," he said.

He proposed a quarterly round table between leading NGOs, public administrators, representatives and enterprises and which are interested in development, where private partnership can create a strategy to solve regional economic problems.

Participants representing nearly 50 NGOs in Irbid said NGOs working with the disabled, for example, usually lack moral and financial support.

Ibrahim Zu'mot, counselling unit manager of JETT project, said that other recommendations were made during the meeting on how to train cadres on starting income generating projects.

She said participants suggested

a number of sustainable projects for NGOs in the Irbid governorate can be proposed through JETT, which will select the project most suitable to the local community to ensure the sustainability of the project.

Mrs. Zu'mot added that participants requested that GIUVS governorate offices be given more privileges to facilitate the role of NGOs in different areas of the Kingdom, and stressed that NGO representatives can contact the QAF counselling unit with problems. Services are free.

JETT, in cooperation with QAF, also launched a five-day training course on "NGOs and Environment" in Queen Zein Al Sharaf Complex.

"We were trying to discuss the role of NGOs in Jordan and their contribution in environmental issues," said Zaid Alawneh, awareness coordinator of the water project at the Jordanian Environment Society.

"These projects will be considered by Eurocom, as their representatives are aware of the priorities of the donors and the country," added Mr. Alawneh.

WHAT'S GOING ON

JERASH FESTIVAL

- Egyptian play "The Good and the Evil" at the South Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
- City Ballet of London "Sleeping Beauty" at the North Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
- Iraqi play "The Mantle" at Artimes Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
- Jad in Grandma Talese / Lebanon at the South and Light Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
- Musical performance by students from the American School at Garasia Theatre at 8:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.
- Performances by the Jordan Armed Forces Orchestra (6:30 p.m.), Rozana Group of Jordan (7:00 p.m.), Izmir Folklore of Turkey (8:00 p.m.), Datina Group of Romania (9:00 p.m.), Sakumoh Group of Zimbabwe (10:00 p.m.), and U.K. Five-Star Circus (11:00 p.m.).

EXHIBITIONS

- "Exhibition of Arab Sculptors" at the garden of the Weibdeh Muntazah, Jabal Weibdeh, until Aug. 8.
- "The Small Sculptors Exhibition" at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens Street (Tel. 5537598), until Aug. 8.
- Display of products at Jordan Design Trade Centre of Noor Al Hussein Foundation, off Wadi Sagra (Tel. 5699141/2), until August 6.
- "Contemporary Arab Artists Exhibition — New Collection" at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh (Tel. 4643251).

Publishing industry faces uphill battle as amendments to draft press move to plenary

By Dima Hamdan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — What could happen to a Jordanian studying abroad who brings his text books into the country "illegally"? He could be fined up to JD1,000. Or, what about a person who is caught out importing an "illegal" book to add to his personal library? That book could be confiscated.

It all sounds a bit medieval and highly impractical in the age of information technology, but, should the government's draft press and publications law be approved without further adjustment to its present phrasing, the aforementioned might not be so improbable after all.

Fathi Al Bis, president of the Jordanian Publishers Union (JPU), has expressed dismay that recent amendments to the draft focused only on journalists, periodicals and financial penalties, while other vital factors pertaining to free speech and free expression of ideas — such as the work of publishing houses — were not dealt with.

In a recent memorandum addressed to the Senate and the Lower House of Parliament, the JPU highlighted several

ambiguous clauses and drew attention to the severe consequences this law would have not only on the publishing industry itself, but on the most basic and mundane actions of the Jordanian public; from purchasing books to printing wedding invitation cards.

The memorandum tackled four main aspects of the draft concerning distribution agencies and publishing houses: the registration of these establishments, imported publications, locally printed publications and prohibitions pertaining to the contents of all printed and reprinted materials.

The JPU — to which 78 publishing houses belong — argues that the draft's requirements are too arduous to be practically implemented, nor are they economically feasible.

According to Article 36, two copies of any publication entering the Kingdom must be submitted to the director for approval before distribution or sale.

The definition of "publications" in the draft is so ambiguous that it could potentially refer to virtually anything from fliers and pamphlets to multi-volume encyclopaedias. The draft also does not obligate the director to inform the publisher within a certain period of his decision, nor does it specify

whether or not the director is obliged to return the reviewed material to the publisher.

"The government has to decide what it really wants: either an open and democratic society, or a closed one"

The memorandum argues that, assuming that Jordanian distributors import an average of 3,000 titles per year, at an average cost of JD5 per title, publishers would bear an average cost of JD30,000 per year for books they may not be able to sell. These figures do not take into consideration multi-volume publications which could push this cost up to JD50,000.

In the past, according to verbal agreements struck with the PPD, pub-

lishers submitted a list of imposed titles to the PPD director, who would choose a number of them for monitoring if they are feared to be politically controversial. The PPD director would normally commit to a specified period of time to inform the publishers of his decision.

The JPU in its memorandum suggested amending Article 36 accordingly, and limiting the decision-making period to 14 days. However, this condition was not granted in the amendments approved by the National Guidance Committee last week.

Locally-printed materials are also subject to a similar procedure. Two copies of each manuscript must be submitted to the director for approval, and a decision should be made within one month.

Members of the JPU are estimated to produce 2,200 titles every year. "Seventy percent of our production are text books for universities and schools," says Mr. Al Bis.

Text books must not be subject to censorship.

Again, the draft's wide definition of "publications" could mean that publishers will be obliged to submit even wedding invitations for the director's

approval.

"The entire matter will depend on the calibre of the director," said Mr. Al Bis. "If he disregards the procedures, he's doing you a favour, if he insists on following the procedure, then he's merely applying the law."

The criteria upon which the director bases his decision are embedded in Article 42, a list of 14 vague prohibitions by which, says Mr. Al Bis, the PPD director would be allowed to arbitrarily ban a publication, while arguing that he acted in accordance with the law.

"This is a face-saving tactic," says Mr. Al Bis.

"These regulations are open to broad interpretation, according to the director's personal beliefs and standards," he said. "And in most cases, the director might be compelled to prohibit publications because he doesn't want to risk allowing something that others wouldn't, nor would he risk losing his job."

"The Scientific Roots of Philosophy" by Adel Dhaib is one example of at least 20 books confiscated in the past two months, although they were previously allowed in the Kingdom. Suddenly it was decided that the book was

against religion and, therefore, banned. The 1993 Press and Publications Law forbids the circulation or publication of any material that offends any religion protected by the Constitution.

Although this law is imposed on all printed material, including specialised publications such as medical texts or texts on scientific research, the draft does not stipulate any qualifications or skills for the PPD employees who will monitor publications.

The JPU now seriously fears that the majority of publishers will be compelled to shift their businesses to neighbouring countries in order to avoid the grave losses, thus hindering investment in the publishing industry when Jordan needs to develop this sector.

"The government has to decide what it really wants, either an open and democratic society, or a closed one," said Mr. Al Bis.

"The most dangerous thing about this law is that it transforms Jordan into a closed society and the only key is in the hands of the director [of the PPD] who makes decisions for Jordanians regarding what they should read or write, and when they are allowed to obtain information."

India-Pakistan talks fail, tens killed in border killings

COLOMBO (AP) — Talks between India and Pakistan to revive negotiations on long-standing disputes broke down Friday, with Pakistan saying it found no basis for resuming the dialogue and India accusing its neighbour of interfering in its domestic affairs.

In Kashmir, the main dispute India and Pakistan were trying to solve, soldiers exchanged mortar and artillery fire across the frontier, killing 52 people and injuring more than 100 others, mostly civilians. While border clashes are common, the exchanges of the last four days were heavier than usual.

Pakistani spokesman Tariq Altuf accused India of taking a "rigid and inflexible position" on Kashmir, over which two wars have been fought since India and Pakistan became independent 50 years ago.

Mr. Altuf said "it has not been possible to reach an agreement" after officials met briefly in the morning for the second time this week in Colombo. "No basis exists for resumption

of dialogue," Mr. Altuf said. However, Mr. Altuf said Pakistan will remain ready to hold "urgent, meaningful and result-oriented dialogue" to resolve the disputes.

India's senior diplomat, Foreign Secretary K. Raghunath, said Pakistan's "obsessive" focus on Kashmir while ignoring other disputes "is as neurotic for individuals as for nations."

Pakistan suggested a list of measures India should take to build confidence, such as releasing prisoners and giving United Nations monitors a greater role. But Mr. Raghunath dismissed the proposals as meddling in India's business. "They don't constitute a realistic basis for conducting negotiations," he said.

The failure of the talks dampened hopes raised by the first meeting between the Pakistani and Indian prime ministers since each country detonated nuclear devices in May, which had raised regional tensions to new heights.

After their meeting

Wednesday, India's Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Pakistan's Nawaz Sharif ordered their foreign ministries to find ways to revive stalled discussions on disputes ranging from Kashmir to demarcating the boundary of a lake.

The Vajpayee-Sharif encounter carried extra symbolism because it was their first face-to-face discussions since Mr. Vajpayee's Hindu nationalist government took office in March.

"The outcome so far is zero," Mr. Sharif was quoted Friday as saying after he returned from a retreat with all the leaders Thursday.

In an interview published in The Island newspaper, Mr. Sharif accused India of dragging its feet on Kashmir, which he said was the core issue between the neighbouring nations. "Let us resolve the issues of Kashmir in a serious and substantive manner so that we would be able to make progress," he was quoted as saying.

In the past, New Delhi has said it is willing to discuss

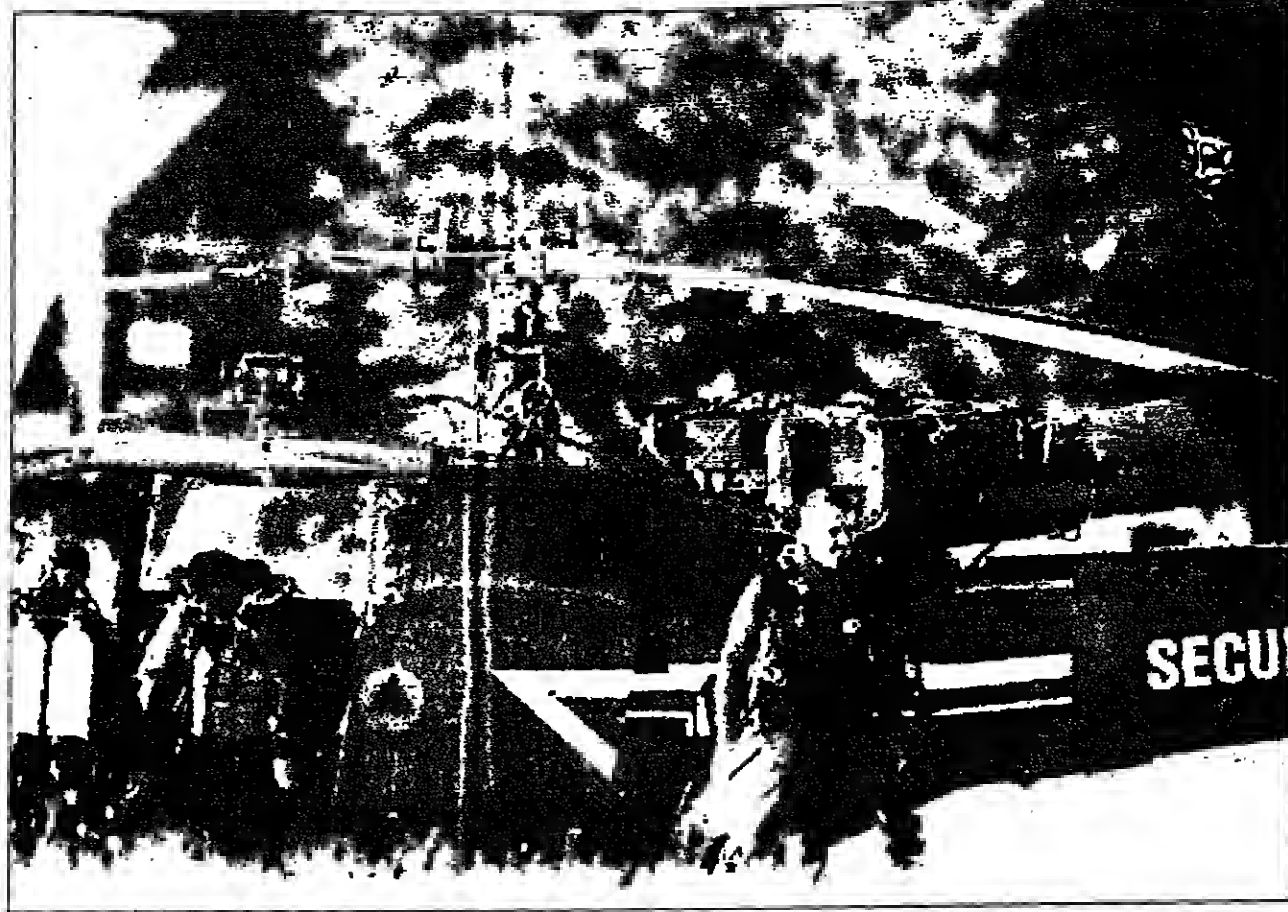
Kashmir only in the context of broader talks between the two nations. It also has rejected mediation by a third country, which Pakistan favours.

Kashmir, a Muslim-majority area, was ruled by a Hindu king who opted to join India when colonial Britain carved out both nations in 1947. It is now divided between the two countries.

Pakistan wants Kashmiris of both sides of the border to be allowed to vote on which country they want to join. India opposes the plebiscite, outlined in United Nations resolutions of the 1940s.

Friday's talks were stalled because India insisted it would not give top priority to discussing Kashmir and the nuclearisation of South Asia, Mr. Altuf said. India has insisted it will discuss these issues only in the overall context of bilateral relations.

New Delhi wants to link discussion on Kashmir to what it says is continued Pakistani support to guerrilla fighting Indian soldiers.



Rescue divers land at an aerodrome near the Breton town of Quiberon, following a search at sea for survivors, after two light aircraft collided in mid air. Six people were killed and nine more are missing in the accident which occurred some 10 kilometres off the French part of Quiberon (Reuters photo)

Rescuers resume search for dead in French air crash

RENNES (R) — French rescue crews resumed their search at dawn Friday for the victims of a mid-air collision as investigators probed how the two small planes could have crashed off the Atlantic coast killing 15 people.

Eight bodies were still missing after the two planes, flying over the ocean liner Norway anchored in Quiberon Bay off the western coast,

crashed late Thursday afternoon.

Seven recovered bodies were in a temporary morgue at Quiberon. One of the planes, a Beechcraft of the Proteus airline, was flying from the southern city of Lyon to Lorient in the west with 12 passengers and two crew members.

The second plane, a single-engine Cessna belonging to a local flying club, had only one person aboard.

Fabien Beaumont, a photographer for a local newspaper, said the plane he was flying in while taking pictures of the Norway had just turned to go home when a crash warning came over the plane's radio.

"Right ahead of us, we saw a plane falling. It was a Beechcraft that had just hit a Cessna," he told LCI television.

French radio and television said the Beechcraft had

changed its normal route to fly over the cruiser.

"If he changed his route, he must have had a good reason to do so," said Franklin Devaux, chief of the Proteus airline, who said the pilot was an experienced flyer with 3,800 flight hours to his name.

Transport Minister Jean-Claude Gayssot rushed to the scene to review the rescue operation and express his condolences.

S. Africa's doctor death testifies in truth probe

CAPE TOWN (R) — South Africa's "Doctor Death", former chemical warfare chief and the reluctant last witness before Archbishop Desmond Tutu's truth commission, gave grudging testimony Friday about his work under white rule.

After two days of legal efforts to avoid having to testify, former defence force Brigadier Winter Basson told the statutory Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) he liaised with chemical warfare experts in countries including the former Soviet Union in the 1980s.

Mr. Basson, dubbed "Doctor Death" by the South African media, denied that his research station ever explored chemical methods to selectively assassinate blacks, an allegation made in earlier testimony by former colleagues.

The 48-year-old Basson, who joined the apartheid era defence force in 1975 as a lieutenant and leapt through the ranks to become a brigadier in 1988, said he was pushing at open doors when he joined the world in the early 1980s, gathering information for his deadly work.

"I had access to very senior people at that time," he told the panel headed by Nobel laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

"In America, Europe and Britain there was a very great concern at the chemical warfare capabilities of the East bloc," Mr. Basson, surrounded by a swarm of lawyers paid for by the South African National Defence Force, said.

"At that stage in South

Africa we had information on the chemical warfare capabilities of Russians, Cubans and East Germans in neighbouring states. I was asked to share the information we collected," he added.

Mr. Basson testified reluctantly and avoided detailed answers to most of the questions put to him. The panel will have no authority to continue grilling him beyond midnight.

Mr. Tutu's panel would officially end its probe into the human rights record of the war over apartheid at midnight Friday. This will end the TRC's broad investigation of the activities of the ruling white minority and of the black liberation forces.

But an autonomous amnesty committee set up under the auspices of the same Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act of 1995 will continue to weigh, often in public session, appeals for pardon or for immunity from prosecution.

Over the past two months the panel has heard evidence that Mr. Basson was the linkup of a programme that developed undetectable poisons to assassinate people, plotted to make blacks infertile and manufactured vast quantities of illegal drugs.

Mr. Basson, who faces criminal trial next month on charges ranging from conspiracy to murder, to making and possessing a tonne each of mandrax and ecstasy as well as fraud, flatly denied knowledge of the

infertility programme.

His legal team, led by advocate Jaap Cilliers, reserved the right Friday to ask for proceedings to go behind closed doors if at any time they risked prejudicing his trial.

"I deny there was any project at Roozplaat Research Laboratories initiated by the defence force to control human fertility," Mr. Basson said.

Roozplaat Research Laboratories (RRL), near Pretoria, was one of a string of front companies secretly set up by the defence force to develop a chemical warfare capability.

A scientist who worked on the project testified last month that there was an order to set up the infertility project.

"There was no such instruction and no such project as registered at RRL," Mr. Basson countered Friday.

"If the scientists had results on certain scientific projects they would report to me," he said, adding that he would then report to his superiors including the surgeon general, the head of the army and the head of intelligence.

Niel Kinnel, surgeon general from 1988 to 1994, told the panel last month he had no detailed knowledge of the work at RRL and its sister plant Delta G Scientific, and that Mr. Basson kept his briefings to generalities.

By contrast, Mr. Basson said Friday that during his often lengthy absences, scientists at the two front companies would report directly to the surgeon general.

Britain bans use of anti-personnel landmines

LONDON (R) — Britain Friday imposed a total ban on the use of anti-personnel mines by its forces in a tribute to the landmines campaign launched by Princess Diana in the months before her death.

Defence Secretary George Robertson, fulsome in praise of Diana's legacy, said he was acting to "wipe away" an exemption that allowed use of mines in exceptional circumstances.

The symbolic move by Britain was aimed at encouraging other states to support the so-called Ottawa Process, a Canadian initiative for nations that want to ban the production, stockpiling, export and use of mines.

"What we now have to concentrate on is getting those countries who have not yet signed up to the Ottawa Treaty," Mr. Robertson told BBC Radio.

He said Britain also hoped its decision would put pressure on countries that are still manufacturing and using landmines.

"The most professional army in the world now has said this is not a system that is morally correct or militarily useful," Mr. Robertson said.

Britain used a small number of anti-personnel mines in its 1982 Falklands campaign to liberate the South Atlantic islands from an Argentine invasion force.

The Labour government has already committed itself to destroying its stocks well ahead of time limits set under the Ottawa Process.

Princess Diana, killed in a Paris car crash last August, gave the anti-landmines campaign a major boost with high-profile visits to Angola and Bosnia. Pictures of her comforting victims were carried around

the world.

Landmines are blamed for killing 25,000 people a year and maiming many more — mostly women and children.

Mr. Robertson said the ban was a fitting tribute to mark the first anniversary of Diana's death.

"Princess Diana had a huge impact on public opinion — not just in this country but internationally," Mr. Robertson told Sky Television.

He said the princess had taken "a subject that most people were concerned about and turned it into an international tide of opinion that has convinced a huge number of countries that this form of warfare is outmoded, disgraceful and has to be outlawed completely."

"As we approach the first anniversary of her death, I think it is a fitting legacy that we should by that time have the 40 countries

required ratifying the treaty to bring it into force," Mr. Robertson said.

"She had a big impact on an international campaign that has been for the good of the world," he added.

The campaign has now been taken up by Queen Noor who called landmines "the cruelest, most severe form of warfare." Britain has now destroyed about half of its stock of 500,000 landmines.

The convention has so far been signed by 126 states but not by the United States, China and Russia. It will come into force once it has been ratified by 40 countries.

Washington has refused to sign until it develops an alternative to anti-personnel mines. It has kept more than one million of them in the demilitarised zone between North and South Korea.

Taiwan city councillor murdered by China kidnappers

BEIJING (AFP) — A Taiwan city councillor has been murdered after being kidnapped in connection with a business dispute during a visit to northeastern China's Liaoning province, local officials said Friday.

Lin Ti-Chuan, a councillor from Kaohsiung city, was found dead at 3:00 a.m. (1900 GMT Thursday) in Haicheng Central Hospital, the director of the Taiwan affairs office in Haicheng city, Luo Xiaogang, told AFP.

It was unclear how Lin, who was abducted at knife-point together with her boyfriend earlier in the week, got to the hospital, he said. Hospital staff members contacted by telephone refused to reveal the cause of death.

The official identified the police's chief suspect in the kidnapping as a local business partner of the Taiwan politician, Li Guangzhi.

Mr. Li, head of Haicheng Huamei Industrial Co. Ltd.'s representative office in Dalian city, made a booking for the Taiwan couple at a Dalian hotel and together with accomplices allegedly abducted the couple at 11:00 p.m. Monday.

Lin and her boyfriend



Lin Ti-Chuan

Mr. Wei said since the latter regained his freedom, told reporters in Taiwan Friday the boyfriend identified Lin's body.

She died after the kidnappers gave her injections, Mr. Huang said. Eleven members of Lin's family and four members of the opposition

Democratic Party (DPP) with which she was affiliated were due to arrive in Dalian on a flight from Hong Kong, according to television reports in Taiwan.

Police authorities were not available for comment. The boyfriend escaped the kidnappers unharmed Wednesday, but Lin remained held with her abductors demanding \$200,000 in ransom.

Taiwan officials said. Another Kaohsiung councillor, Huang Chao-Hsing, who said he had kept in close touch with

since January 1994, and there is a long history of business dispute-related kidnappings of overseas Chinese on the mainland.

The DPP is regularly denounced by China for its overt advocacy of independence for Taiwan, which Beijing regards as a break-away province.

The party called on China to provide better protection to Taiwan residents at a press conference Friday.

"We feel sad and angry," DPP chairman Hsu Hsin-Liang told reporters, reacting to Lin's death.

"We demanded that the Chinese government do everything it can to apprehend the murderers and bring them to trial," he added.

Taiwan's quasi-official negotiating body, the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF), said it sent a letter Thursday to Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS), its mainland counterpart, to ask for assistance in rescuing Lin.

In the absence of official relations between the rival Beijing and Taipei regimes, SEF and ARATS handle all contacts between the two sides.

Indirect trade, investment and other unofficial exchanges resumed during the 1980s, however.

Dog dies rescuing swimmers

PARIS (R) — A Newfoundland terrier named Man has become a French national hero after giving its life to save three tourists from drowning in rough Mediterranean waters off the southern tip of Corsica.

Amid reports about the pleasures of summer vacation, Friday's press

highlighted the story of the rescue dog that loved a life-guard's surfboard to shore with the exhausted swimmers, two Dutch and one British, hanging onto it for life.

Just before reaching the beach at Proprium Tuesday, crashing waves separated the group. Frenchmen called to

the scene were able to haul the tourists ashore but the exhausted dog went under and drowned.

Man's owner Pascal Brocchi said the tourists were so exhausted from fighting the waves that they could not even kick their feet to help bring the surfboard back to shore.

Busi

Direct estimate

Be sui

Gen tak

Obu rem



Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto with her unidentified attorney, talks to reporters at Karachi press club. Bhutto Friday filed a 90-million-rupee (\$1.95-million) defamation suit against the government's chief corruption investigator, court officials said (Reuters photo)

Benazir Bhutto files defamation suit against corruption investigator

KARACHI (AP) — Former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto filed a million-rupee (\$1) defamation suit against the government's top corruption investigator, saying he was making it impossible for her to get a fair trial in a slew of cases she faces.

In her court papers, Ms. Bhutto accused Salfur Rehman, head of the Accountability Commission, of defaming her in comments to journalists. She sought 20 million rupees (about \$350,000) for

mental anguish and another 70 million rupees (about \$1.25 million) for damage to her reputation.

"The atmosphere has been poisoned. In this atmosphere no fair trial is possible," Ms. Bhutto told reporters as she left the provincial high court in Karachi.

"The future of my political life, my liberty, the future of my political party — everything is at stake," Aides to Mr. Rehman said he was not immediately

available for comment.

After defeating Ms. Bhutto in 1997 elections, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif established a separate anti-corruption team to investigate allegations that Ms. Bhutto and her family siphoned off millions of dollars from the state.

Ms. Bhutto has since been indicted in several cases.

Ms. Bhutto says Mr. Sharif's accusations are groundless and his government is conducting a witch hunt.

German language reform takes effect, critics still fighting

BERLIN (AP) — The controversial German language reform officially takes effect Saturday. But despite a green light from Germany's highest court, not everyone is rushing to make the switch.

Critics complain the new rules, intended to simplify the way German is written, actually make things more complicated and were still pushing Friday for at least a delay, if not complete abandonment of the effort.

Opponents could still throw a wrench in the works if they win a state referendum on the reform in Schleswig-Holstein on Sept. 27 — the same day as federal parliamentary elections.

But it's unclear exactly what impact the referendum could have, since Germany's highest court already upheld on July 14 the right of the government to implement the changes.

Many schools in fact have already adopted the new rules, agreed to in 1996 by officials of German-speaking countries.

They make writing snappier by eliminating many comma

rules.

"The man who came to dinner" will no longer require a comma before the "who," for example.

It also separates many strung-together compound words — "remainings" becomes "remain sitting" — and introduces more phonetically German spellings for foreign words, like "Ketschup" for "Ketchup" and "Kommunikée" for "Kommunique," or communiqué.

While the Austrians and Swiss have generally accepted them, the new rules met with hefty protest in Germany from leading authors and many ordinary citizens who object to tampering with the language of Goethe and Schiller.

Free Democrat chairman Wolfgang Gerhardt, whose party is part of Chancellor Helmut Kohl's coalition government, said Friday that linguists, writers and literary experts should be allowed to have a say on the new rules.

Then they could take effect when they've been corrected enough so that they are

generally accepted as a real improvement," he said.

Many newspapers and news agencies are waiting until after the referendum to decide what they will do.

School textbooks have already been repointed to adopt the new way of writing, but many authors have demanded excerpts from their works that appear in the books remain as originally written.

Many government bureaucrats, who are also supposed to start writing the new way at work, are also balking.

Official forms will have to be revised and computer programmes rewritten.

Half of the 16 states say they won't be ready by Saturday and are putting off the switch.

"How many work hours, how much energy will be put into this chaos?" Mr. Gerhardt asked.

In fact, the old way of writing will still be considered acceptable until July 31, 2005. And adults who haven't learned the new rules can keep writing their letters however they want.

Obuchi defends minister who remarks on wartime sex-slaves

TOKYO (AP) — Japan's new Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi Friday defended his new cabinet member who said war-time sex slaves known as "comfort women" were not forcibly taken by the Imperial Army.

Mr. Obuchi fielded questions from reporters about the remarks by new Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Minister Shioichi Nakagawa who told his first news conference early Friday he was not sure whether comfort women were forced into prostitution by the Japanese Army in World War II.

"There is no problem since he had denied all what he had

said," Mr. Obuchi told an inaugural news conference.

The 45-year-old Nakagawa said in his first news conference: "I have doubts in my mind about including the issue of comfort women in textbooks as historical facts."

The minister retracted his remarks a few hours after making them, admitting that some women were forced to work as sex slaves. Mr. Nakagawa however did not apologise for his statements.

"There was forcible recruitment, which is the government's stance and I abide by it," he later said, adding he also assured Mr. Obuchi he would stick to the official line.

"I was told by him that he would obey the government's position," Mr. Obuchi said.

Jiji Press and Kyodo News Agency said Mr. Nakagawa would withdraw from a history study group including young LDP lawmakers that demands deleting the description of the comfort women issue from Japanese textbooks.

Historians say some 200,000 young women, mostly from Korea, but also from China, the Philippines as well as Indonesia where some Dutch girls were press-ganged, were forced to work in Japanese army brothels during the war.

Refugee agency steps up rescue efforts in Kosovo

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia (AFP) — The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Friday intensified its drive to help thousands of civilians who have fled the region around Malisevo, an Albanian rebel stronghold captured by Serb forces Tuesday.

For the first time since the start of a major Serb offensive in Kosovo, a UNHCR mission managed Thursday to make contact with a group of refugees in the wooded hills around Malisevo.

They discovered a village-size group of 500 displaced civilians, mainly women and children, living in forest hide-outs near the village of Crnovrano, west of Malisevo, for four days, UNHCR spokes-

woman Maki Shinohara told AFP.

Ms. Shinohara said the number of people displaced — put at 100,000 Monday — "could have grown by more than 10,000."

A series of military defeats inflicted by the Serbs on the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) has emptied entire villages of their populations.

The KLA separatists are fighting for independence for the southern Serbian province, which has a 90-per cent ethnic-Albanian majority.

Malisevo, a rebel stronghold, fell Tuesday to the Serbs after KLA fighters evacuated it without a struggle, while fighting continued on the outskirts of

town.

"The civilians we saw do not have water and have very little food," said Ms. Shinohara.

"Among them are at least five new-born babies. Their situation is very serious. They sleep under trees. We saw no armed men among them. They are very frightened," she said.

"We believe there must be many more in the forests," she added.

"We will try to send them an aid convoy with goods of prime necessity as quickly as possible."

In Geneva, the UNHCR said it would try to help the refugees, but "the problem is that there's really no place to put them," said another spokesman, Kris

Janowski.

"They are not going to return to their burning villages the Yugoslav army now controls. They can't escape to Albania," he said.

"They're probably stuck where they are."

He added that it would be hard to reach the refugees because they are dispersed all over the forests and the roads leading to them are probably full of explosive land mines.

Since Thursday, the agency has been warning of a "humanitarian disaster" in central Kosovo.

An EU delegation said Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic had assured it in a meeting Thursday in Belgrade that the offensive "has come to a halt."

Still, in a statement made after that meeting, Mr. Milosevic vowed once again to "eradicate all violence" by armed Albanian separatists in Kosovo.

As such, the crisis in Kosovo has entered into "a phase of unpredictable consequences for regional security," said Bronislaw Geremek, the serving chairman of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Fighting broke out in Kosovo in late February when Serb forces launched a crackdown against separatists in the southern Serbian province. More than 500 people are reported to have been killed since then.

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Surpassing the Arab impasse

HRH PRINCE HASSAN'S appeal to young Arab leaders to put aside their individual countries' claims and focus instead on the common Arab identity to build a stronger Arab World, is a reminder of how the Arabs blundered a great deal of their resources and energies in the past few decades in inter-Arab fighting and petty quarrels.

Although colonialism has not dented the Arabs' strong feeling of identity, based on common religion, language and heritage, the Nation appears still plagued by narrow national state interests without any vision of how to deal with the future except to repeat die-hard slogans.

Pushing aside their feuds and standing as a united bloc, the Arabs would not only be able to make their voice heard on world fora, but also would enjoy greater prosperity and economic growth, that are the result of increased regional cooperation.

In an era of globalisation, the Arabs only hope to compete with the powerful blocs of Asia, Europe and the Americas is only the formation of their own regional grouping.

The obstacles to establishing an effective regional mechanism and the required institutions are many. Historically, colonialism claimed a heavy toll on the Arab Nation, initially fragmenting it and subsequently depriving it of natural political growth. That has hindered the Arabs' economic growth. Today, as the Crown Prince has often said, the "economies of despair," based on the arms race, drug trafficking, the short-sighted exploitation of natural resources and the destruction of the environment, all have had far-reaching effects on our region.

But blaming the past or somebody else for our ailments will not take us out of the impasse. Nor will a return to the past salvage us from the state of affairs that we have reached. Our glorious past cannot possibly be resurrected by the use of the same old tools.

Today's progress and development can only be achieved through the freeing of minds and the use of the tools of the present — science, technology and above all, democracy.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Arab Al Yawm's Rihab Fara commented on the final report prepared by the investigation committee formed by the Ministry of Water to look into the reasons behind the occurrence of strange taste, colour and odour in the water supply. Fara said the report concluded that senior officials never commit mistakes. The report blamed junior employees, who will be dismissed and replaced by others who have some push in the government, according to Fara. The report says the reason behind the occurrence of the murky water is not taking the proper procedures to reduce the flood water to the filters and not increasing the amount of carbon used in water treatment, the writer said. She said the report never indicates the source of the polluted water and at the same time rules out any possibility that Israel could be the source of the pollution. The report dealt only with a small part of the problem and omitted what was more important, according to Fara. There is lack of qualified staff at the ministry's laboratories, said Fara, adding that senior officials should shoulder their responsibility.

Al Rai's Fahed Faneek cited the report prepared by the Lower Houses Financial Committee as having positive and negative sides. It tackles very serious cases but nothing new, said Dr. Faneek. The writer praised Parliament for calling for the continuation of the economic reform programme. He said the programme required should be conducted by an emergency government, supported by the Parliament and the people as well. The government should be given the green light from His Majesty King Hussein and HRH Crown Prince Hassan to make the necessary changes, he added. Dr. Faneek said some deputies do not want the reform programme to continue, others want to increase our exports to Iraq, not knowing the consequences of both suggestions. According to Dr. Faneek, at a glance the report shows that there are no immediate magical solutions without a price tag.

American peace initiative fails fast

By Pascal B. Karny

IT APPEARS that the American initiative to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli issue is nearly dead although the U.S. is giving them lip service. It appears Washington has backed out on its facilitator role as Secretary of State Madeleine Albright called for direct talks between the parties concerned without indicating on what basis such talks would be held.

After all the tedious negotiations by Ms. Albright and Mideast peace envoy Dennis Ross (let alone the frequent shuffling of the latter) with Israel as well as with the Palestinians, we have now gone back to square one if not zero. The White House has not even dared to officially publish its proposals for fear of the Republicans in Congress who consider the mere publication as a means of exerting pressure on Israel. Ms. Albright's invitation to negotiate directly evinces the weakness of the U.S. administration's position and a dereliction of its international obligations. The White House was not even able to convince Israel to withdraw from a part of the West Bank which is only one of the conditions of Israeli commitments in the Oslo accord.

Is it not astonishing and disappointing that the U.S., which under President George Bush proclaimed the birth of the New World Order based on the rule of law and international legitimacy, should have so far dismally failed to implement the principles embodied in U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 (let alone Resolution 425 for Lebanon) and in the Oslo accord and following agreements signed by Israel. A foreign observer does not care to know about the internal U.S. reasons which have precluded the government from taking effective measures to force Israel to honour its commitments. What surprises a foreign observer is to witness the United States, sole

superpower in the world, failing to enforce its proposals. It has even failed to identify the party responsible for non-compliance thus leading to a deadlock, although at one time the White House stated that it would reveal publicly the name of that party.

While the U.S. appears to be lenient vis-a-vis Israel, it flexes its muscles at other states such as Iraq, Iran, Libya and Cuba on the ground of upholding international legitimacy. This double-standard policy is unbecoming of a superpower. The lenient policy towards Israel has surely encouraged Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government to simply disregard the U.S. and continue to confiscate Palestinian lands, build more settlements, destroy Arab homes, detain more resisting Palestinians and even torture them — torture which has been legitimised by the High Court in Israel. (In parenthesis: Image what would the world Jewry do if an Arab High Court upheld the detention and torture of a Jew in order to force him to confess his guilt whatever that might be?)

I can bet with some confidence that Netanyahu government will not withdraw from the West Bank. Netanyahu himself is simply prevaricating until he changes the demographic situation on the ground by confiscating more lands and building more settlements until the West Bank becomes predominantly Jewish as he has already done so with respect to Jerusalem. In the meantime he will keep talking about peace and his desire to achieve it so that the Israelis and the world at large believe him. Goebbels the one time minister of information during Hitler's regime used to say keep lying and lying then the people will finally believe you.

The Palestinians should not and could not negotiate for ever while the U.S. is simply watching. The latter as sponsor of the peace process since Madrid conference in 1991 is bound to take

active part in the negotiation and force Israel to abide by its commitments in the international agreements.

In its letter of assurances addressed to the Palestinians, dated October, 18, 1991 on the eve of the Madrid conference, the U.S. stated the following inter alia: "These assurances are consistent with United States policy and do not undermine or contradict United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 and 338. ... We believe Palestinians should gain control over political, economic and other decisions that affect their lives and fate. The United States is determined to achieve comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and will do its utmost to ensure that the process moves forward along both tracks towards this end. In pursuit of a comprehensive settlement, all the negotiations should proceed as quickly as possible towards agreement. For its part the United States will work for serious negotiations and will also seek to avoid prolongation and stalling by any party."

Why then the United States is now shirking its responsibility, as it should continue to play an effective and decisive role in the negotiations and preclude the Israeli party from stalling at its will. In the meantime it should stop Israel from taking unilateral actions which exacerbate tension in the West Bank and pre-empt the final status negotiations to the detriment of the Palestinians. There is a limit to Palestinian patience and as long as their land is occupied they have the right to revert to all means available to them to have their land liberated, even if this should lead to an explosion. This is the right of self-defence against the occupier as recognised under international law and usage.

The writer was an advocate in Palestine in 1944 and, for many years, legal officer at UNRWA headquarters in Beirut and Vienna. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

Tourism — the fuel that could propel growth

By Riad Al Khouri

THOUGH THERE is no simple answer to the question of how Jordan can escape from its current economic predicament, tourism is a sector which could take the lead. Minister of Tourism Akel Biltaji is fond of stressing the World Bank's emphasis on tourism being "a propeller of Jordan's national economy." An aeronautic metaphor is apt: if we think of economies as planes, the U.S. could be a Stealth (fast and high-tech), France a Concorde (also fast and high-tech, but with champagne served on board), and Jordan a propeller-driven affair (reliable though ancient, and capable of gaining altitude albeit slowly). If Mr. Biltaji and others in Jordan have their way though, the next couple of years could see this changing, and the Jordanian economy could look more like an Airbus jetting into the economic stratosphere, with — because of a rush of tourists — no empty seats.

The tourism sector in Jordan

is one of the rare areas in the economy where the dividend played by Jordanian tourism in the economy is strong and obvious, with the sector contributing some 12 per cent on average of GNP over the past five years. However, tourism has the potential to generate more, as it did in the late 1980s with shares of up to fifteen per cent. Tourism earnings have been a consistent source of foreign exchange for decades. After plummeting in 1991, the amount of foreign exchange receipts from tourism in Jordan is once again on the rise as it had been during the 1980s. Foreign exchange earnings from tourism since 1992 have been around 20% of total

foreign exchange income, though still down from 23% in the late 1980s. Job creation is also a key benefit, and about 10,000 people in Jordan are directly employed in the tourist industry, including hotels, restaurants, travel and tourism agencies, tour guides, and transport. The percentage of the labour force employed in the tourism sector has risen steadily over the past five years, and tourism could create about 10 per cent of new jobs in 1999-2001.

The best news of all however is that a distinct political will now seems to exist to boost the tourism industry in Jordan. This was partly reflected in the appointment

and subsequent retention of Minister Biltaji. Preceded by some equally fine men who chalked up some good achievements, the incumbent is nevertheless doing a professional job and should be left to get on with it. Continuity has not often been the rule in the Jordanian cabinet posts, and many hope that any upcoming change in the government will spare Mr. Biltaji and let him go ahead with his plans for Jordan's part in the Year 2000 celebrations of Christ's birth. The occasion is expected to spur a jump in arrivals for that year to over two million, and hopes are for this figure to be maintained and gradually boosted in the early years of the next century.

At the same time, the qualitative impact of tourism could be enormous. Seen by many as a sector where quick and useful cooperation among our neighbours seems to be possible, a unified tourism industry could transform the region into a super-destination and, in the context of a just comprehensive settlement, help in the

transition to a peaceful and flourishing regional economy.

International comparisons are tricky, but the parallel between Jordanian tourism and some Mediterranean economies is interesting. In Spain, Tunisia, and Cyprus tourism played a major role in both materially enriching and positively transforming society. Without pushing the comparisons too far, societies and economies like these three have been altered dramatically by tourism. Some of this change has been for the worse — all change can't be good all the time. Jordan should expect some negative side effects of a tourism boom, including environmental and social problems. However, these can be dealt with. The message for now must be to let the tourism propeller spin and help the plane take off.

The writer is the director of the Jordan Economic Development Association. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

Tourist arrivals in Jordan, 1993-97 (000s)

Year	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Total arrivals	775	858	1,078	1,103	1,129
GC	547	553	567	573	604
Israel	11	11	100	121	126
Europe	173	192	255	252	269
N. America	48	56	56	108	108
Other	27	36	36	49	50

(Source: Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Statistics Section)

Timor: The window of opportunity

By Gwynne Dyer

JAMSHEED MARKER, the United Nations special envoy who visited the Indonesian-occupied territory of East Timor last month (July), said that he saw "a window of opportunity" after the recent fall of Indonesian leader Suharto (who ordered the original invasion in 1975). And, Marker added, "the important thing is what you do with a window of opportunity. You have to jump through it."

Marker is right. The window of opportunity for the colonial possessions that the Soviet Union inherited from imperial Russia came with the collapse of Soviet Communism in 1991, and brought independence to 15 countries from Estonia to Kyrgyzstan, Tibet's and Xinjiang's chance for independence will come when the regime finally changes in China. And East Timor's window of opportunity is now, when Indonesian politics is in transition from tyranny to (hopefully) democracy.

The game is already afoot, although Indonesia's current much-publicised withdrawal of 1,000 "special forces" troops from East Timor is just part of the propaganda war. At least 11,000 troops remain in the former Portuguese colony, plus so many secret police agents that the total security forces in the occupied territory (population 800,000) may exceed 30,000.

More hopeful was Marker's visit on July 17 to East Timor's independence leader, Jose 'Xanana' Gusmao, who is serving a 30-year

sentence in Jakarta's Cipinang prison. The U.N. has never recognised Indonesia's annexation of East Timor, continuing to treat Portugal as the legal administrator pending a democratic decision by the Timorese on their future — but Gusmao gave his approval for Portugal to open talks with Indonesia even though he is still detained.

That is not to say that the negotiations will be easy. Indonesia's Foreign Minister Ali Alatas has offered only internal self-government for East Timor — no referendum on independence, no compensation for 22 years of repression and massacre — in return for international acceptance of Indonesia's conquest of the territory.

At a diplomatic meeting in Manila on July 28, Alatas patiently explained that "there is no way that there can be an independent East Timor, no way in which East Timor can live independently by itself, surrounded by 17,000 islands of Indonesia, right smack in the middle of our archipelago. It is impossible, impossible."

Alatas's dictum would sound very strange to Lesotho, Nepal, Singapore, and a few other countries that get along quite well even though they are more or less surrounded by another, larger nation's territory. Moreover, East Timor is not "right smack in the middle" of Indonesia; it is at the extreme south-east corner of the archipelago, far closer to Australia than to Jakarta. But there was more to Alatas's argument than a mafia for cartographic neatness.

(The East Timorese) would be highly

dependent," he explained, "and (would) always have great difficulty in scraping a living. There would always be tensions and difficulties."

This is partly true. East Timor is not rich in natural resources, and its people were poor even under the Portuguese. But they would be a lot better off now if Indonesia had not invaded them, killed or starved to death a quarter of the entire population in the initial war to destroy popular resistance, brought in settlers from Indonesia to take their place, and kept the entire territory under strict military control for 22 years as part of Jakarta's effort to eradicate the last guerrilla resistance.

So yes, there would be tensions and difficulties — but that is no more a justification for Indonesia to stay in East Timor than it would be for Russia to invade Georgia or for France to reconquer Algeria. The international rule against invading other people's territory and changing borders by force no matter what the excuse is there for a good reason. Without it, the whole world would live permanently on the brink of war.

However, the U.N. cannot enforce that rule without the cooperation of the most powerful countries. For a long time, it could not act on East Timor because it was the United States that instigated and backed Indonesia's invasion in 1975 (for fear that the territory might fall into 'Communist' hands). Subsequent U.S. administrations, while never recognising Indonesian sovereignty over East Timor, protected their friend Suharto from undue pressure.

The U.N., having no troops of its own, can do nothing about crimes like the invasion of East Timor except to refuse to recognise or legitimise the results, and wait patiently until the time comes to put things right. For East Timor, that time is now.

The window of opportunity will stay open until a government with democratic legitimacy is installed in Jakarta. May of next year, perhaps, when interim President B.J. Habibie has promised free elections. Then it will close, because a new, democratically elected government (if it really happens) will have too many problems on its plate to risk alienating extreme nationalists by yielding on East Timor.

But if Habibie's regime makes a deal on East Timor in the next 10 months, then a subsequent democratic government would have little difficulty in accepting an accomplished fact.

What would it cost Indonesia to let East Timor go? Nothing. Even if the only other regions with separatist aspirations — Aceh in northern Sumatra, and West Irian in New Guinea — followed East Timor, Indonesia would lose less than two per cent of its population. And since they have no international support and not much of a legal case for independence, they probably wouldn't follow suit.

Will East Timor make it through the window of opportunity in time? It all depends on the tactics, but Habibie's government is extraordinarily vulnerable to international pressure. It could happen.

'People's concern for King Hussein natural, stability guaranteed'

Reviewed by Mohammad Ben Hussein

Focus on the oped pages of the Arabic dailies last week was on His Majesty King Hussein's health.

Al Arab Al Yawm's Saleh Qallab said Jordanians have the right to worry about King Hussein's health. The people have grown fond of the King in 45 years, and look to him to solve their problems and lead them towards progress, said Qallab. As the father and the leader of the country, King Hussein is on the minds of people from all walks of life during this trying time, added Qallab. The writer said the people are waiting for the King to return home in order to air their grievances about the government, specially

about its draft press and publications law, the differing growth rate figures and the water pollution problem. He said Jordanians are hurt by foreign radio reports about the King's health and refuse to believe these lies about the King's health, he added. They want and need the King to come back to them safe and sound, said Qallab.

Al Rai's Fahed Faneek said it is natural that Jordanians should worry about the King. He said 90 per cent of Jordanians were born after the King came to power, and never knew any other leader. The world associates Jordan with King Hussein, Dr. Faneek said. But the King is human and becomes sick like other, the writer said. Cancer is a curable disease, it only needs a strong will and good medical care to overcome it, said Dr.

Faneek. He said the King is receiving his treatment in one of the best clinics in the world. Dr. Faneek added that the King proved his strong will when he defeated the disease some years ago. Jordanians need the King to return because of the critical situation the country is going through, said Dr.

Week in print

Faneek. Al Rai's Raja Elissa praised the frankness of the King when talking to Jordanians about his health condition. Never have a people witnessed any

leader address them with such openness, said Elissa. The King talked to people from his heart, and the people trust that the King, with his strong will, can defeat the disease, the writer said. People's trust in and love for the King will contribute to King Hussein's recovery, Elissa said. The writer urged the King to talk to his people periodically during his six months of treatment because the people need to be in contact with him, adding that he is the only one who gives them the power to continue their battle.

Al Dustour's Oreth Rintawi said it is justified that Jordanians should worry about the King's health, but not about the future of the Kingdom. The King's wise policy managed to bring Jordan to advanced steps in the eco-

nomic and political arenas, said Rintawi. He created a sense of freedom and liberty within Jordanians, added the writer. All of these facts, said Rintawi, give the Jordanians the right to worry about King Hussein's health. He said people should ignore all forms of propaganda being spread by foreign media about the country's future, adding there is no justification for the rush on the dollar, Jordan's economy is not fragile to be harmed by some baseless rumours. The Constitution is there to determine distribution of authority, rights and obligations of individuals, all guaranteeing Jordan's stability, said Rintawi. A reading of the Kingdom's history will show that Jordan went through similar crises and managed to overcome all of them, the writer said.

Universal health coverage, Uzbekistan, in fear of the Islamists?

By Dilip Hiro

Editor's note: The following is the text of an address made by HRH Prince Firas Ben Radd at a workshop on human development held in Amman on July 21-22. The workshop was a local initiative undertaken by the Jordanian Economic Development Association (JEDA) with assistance and participation from the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in preparation for the Second Mediterranean Development Forum in Marrakesh later this year.

BEFORE PRESENTING a few observations on health and human development in Jordan, allow me to commend the efforts of the World Bank in promoting and organising the Mediterranean Development Forum — a medium through which members of the Mediterranean basin can engage one another, dispassionately, on issues to do with human development (i.e. the promotion of civil space, participatory approaches to development (meaning greater political pluralism), good governance and the rule of law). These types of fora allow the Mediterranean countries to examine the intrinsic relationship between state and society in promoting economic and human development. The fora, in my mind, serve as a reminder that "development" — to its broadest sense; hinges upon the creative energies of people, and only through the promotion of civil space and equal opportunity, can those energies be realised. I would also like to mention how these initiatives coincide quite nicely with the Euro-Med partnerships and activities promoted by the European Economic Community (EEC). While the EEC strives to build a healthy "business" environment between Europe and the Mediterranean, the World Bank is pushing the agenda of "good governance", a recognised pre-requisite for free and fair business activities.

These two pillars of development — government and business — must build a healthy partnership to promote the human potential in our region.

For ours is a region still beset and plagued by many problems — civil strife, exclusionary political arrangements and approaches, overwhelming dependency on exhaustible natural resources, human rights abuses — including women and children, militarisation and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, religious zealotry, greater poverty, minimal export capacity vis-a-vis other regions of the world, intra and interstate political tensions (witness the headlines today about Yemen and Saudi Arabia), a paucity of scientific research and development; and a scant number of fine arts and literary movements — to only name a few of our current problems and challenges.

I should like to address the importance of cooperation among the public, private and NGO sectors in the health care sector in Jordan. This topic, I believe, is as important as it is timely. Health care, like education, is — in economic jargon — a "public good" and cannot be left to the market and the forces of supply and demand. Serious market failures in the area of health care (for example, imperfect information — meaning an asymmetry of knowledge between buyers (physicians) and patients (consumers) and others) necessitate public intervention and regulation. Immunisation, argue many, must be adopted and regulated by the public sector and not left to the whims of the market.

In Jordan, health care provision has traditionally been adopted by the public sector. Both the MOH and the Royal Medical Services (military) pioneered the area of health care provision with university-based services and the private sector arriving to the scene at a much later date. Now, in 1998, an unregulated

private sector has completely taken over pushing the envelope of high-tech medicine and giving health care provision a "commercialised" reputation.

What seems to be needed at this present moment, is thoughtful and systematic planning on how to ensure universal coverage — as a constitutional right of every Jordanian. This issue must be on the forefront of all health priorities. The Ministry of Health and Health Care is now engaged in the process of reforming the health care sector and has taken serious steps in addressing this very issue. In approaching universal health insurance, our government has emphasised the importance of inter-sectoral cooperation. The government hopes to adopt the provider-purchaser model in health care — meaning an emphasis on both public finance and private provision of health care. In other words, only the government will tend to buy health care for its citizens and only the private sector will tend to provide those services. Ideally, if this model is implemented well, two birds can be hit with one stone: Social equity and equality can be realised through public finance; and efficiency in providing service can be sought in the private sector.

One question which remains — and which will hopefully serve as a good lead in to the general discussion — is how would we regulate such a system given the problems the local health insurers face? How long would it take to build up the necessary administrative and technical capacities?

I thank everyone for participating and I hope this workshop will fully prepare us for the upcoming forum in Marrakesh.

GOVERNING A former Soviet republic whose economy is doing surprisingly well should be a satisfying job. That being the case with Uzbekistan, why is its president, Islam Karimov, so edgy these days? Because of his fear of political Islam, represented by Islamists at home and in the region, undermining his staunchly secular regime.

According to the recent United Nations Economic Commission for Europe report on the 12 former Soviet republics, a comparison of 1996 GDP with the 1989 figure shows Uzbekistan second, at 82 per cent (Russia 57 per cent); and first for industrial output, at 108 per cent (Russia 47 per cent). So Moscow should be interested in strengthening commercial links with Tashkent. Indeed, the prime purpose of President Yeltsin's most recent talks with Karimov, in early May, was to finalise a 10-year economic cooperation treaty. But, at Karimov's insistence, their joint statement also referred to the two leaders' commitment to combating "radical Islamic groups in former Soviet Union."

Karimov travelled to Moscow against the backdrop of a trial in Namangan — 20 kilometres east of Tashkent — of a group accused of links with Islamist extremists in Tajikistan and Pakistan, and plotting to replace the present secular system with an Islamic one. So far 17 people have been charged.

On the eve of the trial in early May, Karimov urged parliament to stiffen the law on religious activity. He blamed Islamic fundamentalists in the Fergana Valley in the south east of the country for violence in the region. Their activities, he claimed, included murdering government officials and planning to blow up reservoirs and power stations. Assuming a guilty verdict, Karimov declared:

"Such people must be shot in the head. If necessary, I will shoot them myself."

Parliament stiffened the 1991 law on religious activity, stipulating that religious groups must have a minimum of 100 members instead of the 10 required previously, and that they must register with the government. All unregistered religious associations are henceforth liable to prosecution. Furthermore, anyone donning "religious clothing" in public faces a fortnight's incarceration. This is clearly aimed at pious Muslim women who wear headscarves. Engaging in "extremist religious activity" carries a penalty of five to eight years in jail.

A few weeks after the legislation was amended the official religious organisation, the Muftiat, announced that some 3,000 of the existing 5,000 mosques would be investigated because of their "ambiguous status," and that those lacking proper credentials would be converted to shops or educational or sports centres. Though the Muftiat did not mention the criteria for determining the status of the mosques, it was assumed that it would check if the imam of a mosque had passed the state-sponsored qualifying test.

Tension in the Fergana Valley

Tension between Karimov's fervently secular regime, intent on keeping the state and religion apart, and Islamists, who want to see the state run according to Islamic principles, dates back to the early 1990s and is concentrated in the Fergana Valley.

Containing a third of Uzbekistan's population of 23 million, 90 per cent of whom are Muslim, the Fergana Valley has a long tradition of Islamic piety. With the grip of the atheist Soviet system slackening in the mid-1980s, its inhabitants

started showing their religious colours. Between 1986 and 1991, the number of mosques in Namangan, a city of 360,000, rose from two to 26. The religious upsurge created an environment favourable to the Islamists. Due to their traditional ties with the mosque, they were able to function albeit semi-clandestinely.

As for the government, it combined its legal suppression of Islamists — the 1992 constitution bars the formation of political parties based on religion or ethnic nationalism — with

in the Fergana Valley, the Human Rights Watch report, released on May 26 in Brussels, said: "The government is painting all Muslims with the same brush — those who have criminal intent and the average Muslim who simply wears a beard or goes to the mosque. It is subjecting Muslims on a mass scale to beatings, expulsions from universities and jobs, show trials and lengthy prison terms."

The Karimov regime pays scant attention to such documents. As an official of the Institute for Strategic Studies

in Tashkent put it to a recent seminar on Central Asia in Washington DC: "Wahhabism is a slogan which unifies people. They

want to be active in politics. But we have measures to stop that. It is better to overestimate Wahhabism than to underestimate it. (The term Wahhabi is used loosely in Central Asia to refer to Islamist activists.) Little wonder that in April, reversing their earlier policy of silence on the matter the authorities decided to give maximum publicity to the trials of suspected "Wahhabis."

Trouble among the neighbours

In the interim, Karimov's woes on this front have increased due to the events in neighbouring Tajikistan and Afghanistan. Following the peace treaty between the secular government of Tajikistan and the Islamist-led United Tajik Opposition (UTO) in June 1997 (MEI 556), the administration of President Imamat Rahmonov began sharing power with the UTO in February. By doing so, Karimov believes, Rahmonov has unwittingly accorded a respectability to militant Islamists in former Soviet Central Asia that they have lacked, thus frustrating his own task of projecting them as violent fanatics to be eliminated by

Such conflict, Karimov estimates, could spill over not only in his own republic, which has a Tajik minority of 50 per cent (concentrated in the historic cities of Samarkand and Bukhara), but also into Afghanistan. So far the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance there has managed to hold on to the area adjoining Uzbekistan, thus insulating the Karimov regime from the destabilising impact of the Taliban. The alliance includes an ethnic Uzbek leader, Central Abdul Dostum, who is close to Karimov. Dostum is also the least Islamist of the alliance leaders; indeed he might well be described as a virtual secularist. But the two other factions in the alliance, dominated respectively by ethnic Tajiks and Hazaras, have strong links with Iran, one of the anti-Taliban forces' main sources of arms.

Karimov has kept relations with Iran to the barest minimum. Tehran has reciprocated in kind. Referring to the Uzbek Islamists' trial, Iran's state-run radio criticised Karimov for "suppressing Muslims," arguing that he did not differentiate between "Islamic extremists" and "Islamic reformists."

Karimov finds himself severely handicapped when it comes to combating political Islam in the region. Little wonder that he sought solace from Boris Yeltsin on the subject. However, their joint communiqué stopped short of mentioning any joint plan of action; it merely expressed common thinking. For the beleaguered Karimov even that was preferable to saying nothing on the troubling subject.

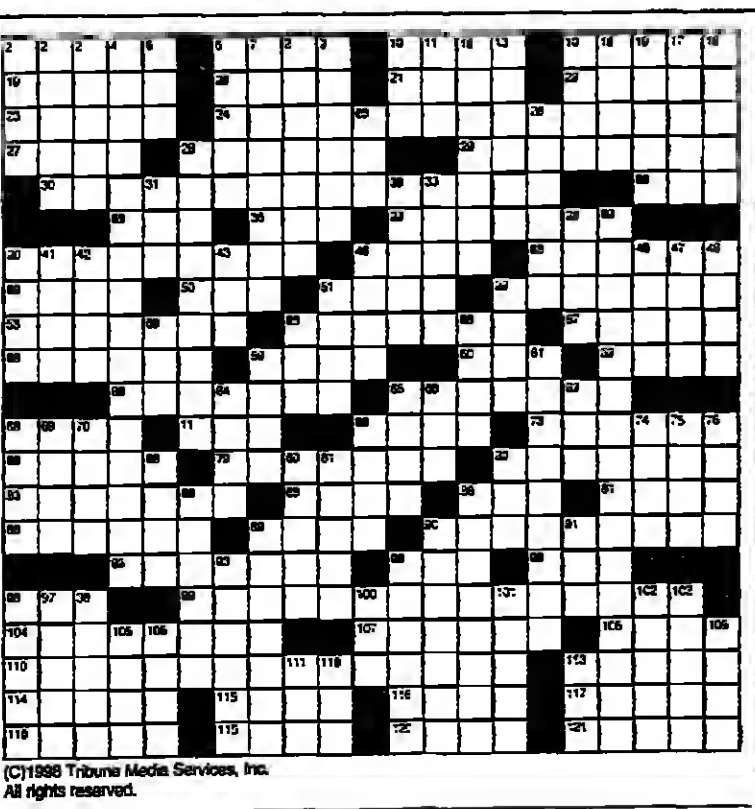
— Middle East International

The Saturday Crossword

JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT

By Robert H. Wolfe, North Woodmere, New York

- ACROSS**
- Shadowy
 - Feature of a
 - leisure
 - Wine stopper
 - Disconcert
 - Remove knots
 - Mother of Apollo and Artemis
 - Bologna hello or goodbye
 - Mythological half-woman monster
 - Chelase apartments
 - Young cowboy's song
 - Closed hand
 - Blue ceramic
 - Polenta
 - Rubber bands
 - Forty novel for youngsters
 - Trending device
 - One of the Bobbsey Twins
 - Edutopia
 - Enduring
 - Barbed people
 - Stick it out
 - It's in music?
 - Semi-eternity?
 - Say more
 - Cheers for readers
 - Old
 - Call it quits
 - Describe name
 - Cosmetology
 - Actor Wynn
 - Envelop
 - Footed
 - Eleventh letters
 - Timeless
 - Go back over
 - Bit of dancing
 - Touch lightly
 - Unadorned
 - Look spots
 - Pendulum
 - Giving more up
 - Guy Fawkes Day
 - blaze
 - Kylophone's
 - Prepared to hit a
 - Operated
 - Indigo dye
 - Actor Eliazar
 - Lay-deck ways
 - Sublimation
 - reputation
 - Dread
 - Curial gain
 - Unimpaired grade
 - Part of A.T.G.
- DOWN**
- Children's song?
 - Fliers
 - Small crowns
 - Utters
 - Makes childishly angry?
 - Former name for an English county
 - Squash
 - European sea eagle
 - teardrop-shaped
 - Evita or Juan of Argentina
 - Ancient Greek colonnades
 - Extremely short time: abbr.
 - Flow of Caen, France
 - we all?
 - Buttocks
 - In the dark
 - Secret supply
 - Child's whim?
 - Sure thing
 - Nonstop sleep
 - Changed chairs
 - Slanted type
 - Marshall, et al.
 - Quarter M
 - Resembling: suff.
 - Horse track
 - Old
 - Eucalyptus eaters
 - London et al.
 - This cash
 - At full speed: archaic
 - Inasmuch as
 - Old verb form
 - CIA's predecessor
 - World Series perfect-game pitcher
 - Browned
 - Goal score
 - Group of eight
 - Suit second
 - Adherents: suff.
 - Similar children?
 - Nightingale
 - Biggie's shoe size
 - Disillusionment
 - McGinn and McInish
 - Loss looking
 - Marine color
 - July birthstone
 - Little legumes
 - Translucent gem
 - Door: suff.
 - Hoofbeats
 - Historic period
 - home (Behold the man!)
 - service club
 - Collier types
 - Tabula
 - Felt regent
 - Blow it
 - Male heir
 - Notoriety
 - Biblical land
 - Fruit baskets
 - Acres: suff.
 - the Fred
 - Remove text
 - Personal subgroup
 - Watered silk
 - Semimetallic element
 - Large land mass
 - Rope abbr.
 - Easter season
 - First grade
 - Required: abbr.
 - Child's injury
 - Member of a
 - Degraded
 - California basketball player
 - Choice: abbr.
 - Drinks makers
 - San Luis, CA
 - Iberian river
 - Meet segment
 - Stone: pref.
 - Had lunch
 - First Order
 - Subgroup
 - Watered silk
 - Semimetallic element
 - Large land mass
 - Rope abbr.
 - Easter season
 - First grade
 - Required: abbr.
 - Child's injury
 - Member of a



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Last Sunday's Crossword Solved

- ACROSS
- SHADOWY
 - FEATURE OF A
 - LEISURE
 - WINE STOPPER
 - DISCONCERT
 - REMOVE KNOTS
 - MOTHER OF APOLLO AND ARTEMIS
 - BOLONGA HELLO OR GOODBYE
 - MYTHOLOGICAL HALF-WOMAN MONSTER
 - CHELSEA APARTMENTS
 - YOUNG COWBOY'S SONG
 - CLOSED HAND
 - BLUE CERAMIC
 - POLLENTA
 - RUBBER BANDS
 - FORTY NOVEL FOR YOUNGSTERS
 - TRENDING DEVICE
 - ONE OF THE BOBBSEY TWINS
 - EDUTOPIA
 - ENDURING
 - BARBED PEOPLE
 - STICK IT OUT
 - IT'S IN MUSIC?
 - SEMI-ETERNITY?
 - SAY MORE
 - CHEERS FOR READERS
 - OLD
 - CALL IT QUITS
 - DESCRIBE NAME
 - COSMETOLOGY
 - ACTOR WYNN
 - ENVELOP
 - FOOTED
 - ELEVENTH LETTERS
 - TIMELESS
 - GO BACK OVER
 - BIT OF DANCING
 - TOUCH LIGHTLY
 - UNADORNED
 - LOOK SPOTS
 - PENDULUM
 - GIVING MORE UP
 - GUY FAWKES DAY
 - BLAZE
 - KYLOPHONE'S
 - PREPARED TO HIT A
 - OPERATED
 - INDIGO DYE
 - ACTOR ELIAZAR
 - LAY-DECK WAYS
 - SUBLIMATION
 - REPUTATION
 - DREAD
 - CURIAL GAIN
 - UNIMPAIRED GRADE
 - PART OF A.T.G.
- DOWN
- CHILDREN'S SONG?
 - FLIERS
 - SMALL CROWNS
 - UTTERS
 - MAKES CHILDISHLY ANGRY?
 - FORMER NAME FOR AN ENGLISH COUNTY
 - SQUASH
 - EUROPEAN SEA EAGLE
 - TEARDROP-SHAPED
 - EVITA OR JUAN OF ARGENTINA
 - ANCIENT GREEK COLONNADES
 - EXTREMELY SHORT TIME: ABBR.
 - FLOW OF CAEN, FRANCE
 - WE ALL?
 - BUTTOCKS
 - IN THE DARK
 - SECRET SUPPLY
 - CHILD'S WHIM?
 - SURE THING
 - NONSTOP SLEEP
 - CHANGED CHAIRS
 - SLANTED TYPE
 - MARSHALL, ET AL.
 - QUARTER M
 - RESEMBLING: SUFF.
 - HORSE TRACK
 - OLD
 - EUCALYPTUS EATERS
 - LONDON ET AL.
 - THIS CASH
 - AT FULL SPEED: ARCHAIC
 - INASMUCH AS
 - OLD VERB FORM
 - CIA'S PREDECESSOR
 - WORLD SERIES PERFECT-GAME PITCHER
 - BROWNED
 - GOAL SCORE
 - GROUP OF EIGHT
 - SUIT SECOND
 - ADHERENTS: SUFF.
 - SIMILAR CHILDREN?
 - NIGHTINGALE
 - BIGGIE'S SHOE SIZE
 - DISILLUSIONMENT
 - MCGINN AND MCINISH
 - LOSS LOOKING
 - MARINE COLOR
 - JULY BIRTHSTONE
 - LITTLE LEGUMES
 - TRANSLUCENT GEM
 - DOOR: SUFF.
 - HOOFBEATS
 - HISTORIC PERIOD
 - HOME (BEHOLD THE MAN!)
 - SERVICE CLUB
 - COLLIER TYPES
 - TABULA
 - FELT REGENT
 - BLOW IT
 - MALE HEIR
 - NOTORIETY
 - BIBLICAL LAND
 - FRUIT BASKETS
 - ACRES: SUFF.
 - THE FRED
 - REMOVE TEXT
 - PERSONAL SUBGROUP
 - WATERED SILK
 - SEMI-METALLIC ELEMENT
 - LARGE LAND MASS
 - ROPE ABBR.
 - EASTER SEASON
 - FIRST GRADE
 - REQUIRED: ABBR.
 - CHILD'S INJURY
 - MEMBER OF A

Regent calls on young Arab leaders to focus on human dignity in decision making

(Continued from page 1)

that future leaders, both in the developed and developing worlds, should acquire in order to attain social justice, democracy, freedom, and economic growth for their countries. He told the audience gathered at the Amman Chamber of Industry that leadership is a collective process and a shared activity, and not the authoritarian imposition of personal will.

"It is the art of reaching the overall, through taking into account the specific ideas of all. The main challenge is not the marginalisation, suppression or exclusion of the ideas of others, but their inclusion," he stressed in the lecture, attended by Prime Minister Abdul

Salam Majali.

"Leadership is all about group work and team work. It is all about inclusion. It is Hassan said, noting that senior and successful leaders project a definitive proposal "only after the necessary consensus has been reached by mid- and high-level support teams."

Broad mindedness and horizontal knowledge — "a knowledge which cuts across global geographies and global societies as well as the various borders separating disciplines and professions" — are a must for successful leaders, he pointed out.

The Crown Prince addressed young leaders from the Afro-Asian region, who face a very difficult task due to the ongoing changes in the

structures of their societies and the strains posed by "unresolved issues between nation and state, tribalism and civil society and questions of race, gender and class."

"Most of all, it has to do with the co-op and adaptation of major religious, ethnic and national traditions into globalisation processes that pit ingrained custom against sometimes heedless innovation."

Young leaders from developing countries, the Crown Prince said, should consider the local, regional and global scenarios at the same time when making decisions at almost any level.

He urged them to consider economic growth — in terms of gross national and domestic products

(GNP and GDP) — "not as an aim, but rather as a means for a better quality of life for all citizens."

To translate into real progress, economic growth should be distributed among all segments of society, preserve the environment and natural resources, create enough jobs to meet the consequences of a growing population, and be accompanied by socio-cultural and political advancement.

"Totalitarianism, gender inequalities, and suppression of minorities are examples of the lack of socio-cultural and political advancement that can reflect negatively on development, despite the accompanying economic growth," the Crown Prince said.

Democracy, media setback in Arab-Muslim World

(Continued from page 1)

Arab monarchies of the Gulf exercise varying degrees of self-censorship to avoid a wide range of subjects deemed controversial. Books, newspapers, magazines, films and videos produced elsewhere are censored before circulation in the region. Kuwait has the most vigorous press and parliamentary debate on the Arab side of the Gulf, although political parties

are officially banned. Conservative Muslim groups operate newspapers and magazines and exert pressure for stricter social controls.

Ironically, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, two of the countries with the most tightly controlled domestic media, fund offshore satellite television stations which beam relatively uncensored news across the region.

Saudi-owned newspapers published from London are also regarded as

among the most authoritative in the Middle East, although they tread very carefully on Saudi politics.

Menard said the offshore Saudi-owned media were both a prestige tool, cementing Saudi regional leadership aspirations, and a valve to release pressure from Arab intellectuals.

In Iran, an unprecedented number of new publications have been licensed since reformist President Mohammad Khatami took office last August. Some

have fallen foul of the hardline Islamic justice authorities and been forced to fold.

Greater press freedom and public debate, including the authorisation of some demonstrations, have been major elements in a continuing power struggle between Khatami and hardliners.

The president made a ringing call this week for press freedom and religion as core principles of the Islamic republic.

ABC Bahrain expected to buy 26% of Housing Bank's share in ABC (Jordan) for JD12m

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Arab Banking Corporation (ABC) in Bahrain is most likely to buy the Housing Bank's share of the ABC branch in Amman under a big contract that is expected to be concluded at the stock market Saturday, a broker told the Jordan Times Friday.

The broker, who asked not to be named, said the ABC main office in Manama has reached an agreement to buy the Housing Bank share in ABC (Jordan), which amounts to 26 per cent of the bank's capital in the Kingdom.

He added that the contract is expected to exceed JD12 million.

The ABC headquarters in Bahrain has an 80 per cent equity of its branch in the Kingdom. The ABC's share price is JD2.25.

Meanwhile, low turnover by foreign investors at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) led to a slight decrease in the stock exchange's turnover in the past week compared to the previous week's figures.

The weekly bulletin showed that last week's turnover in the AFM amounted to JD8.1 million compared to JD14.3 million in the previous week.

Naim Nageeb, a broker at the AFM, said that foreign

investment involvement was partly felt at the AFM during the past week trading, while most of the buying was concluded by local investors.

Mr. Nageeb pointed out that foreign investors focused on the shares of the Arab Bank and the Housing Bank and did not pay much attention to other sectors.

The general price index edged slightly down to 180.1 points at the end of last week from 180.2 points at the end of the previous week.

"The decline in the prices of some companies led to the decrease in the general price index," Mr. Nageeb told the Jordan Times.

The banking sector received the bulk of the turnover, as it amounted to JD5.4 million, or 66.3 per cent, followed by the industrial sector with JD1.4 million, services sector with JD1.2 million (14.9 per cent) and finally the insurance sector with JD88,000, 1.1 per cent.

The bulletin indicated that the organised market received JD6.8 million while the parallel market won JD1.3 million of the overall trading.

Trading in Arab Bank shares, the leading share in the stock exchange, received JD3.6 million of the total turnover. The bank's share price opened at JD218.5 and closed at JD219.5.

The Housing Bank ranked second among the banks that drew the attention of the investors with a turnover amounting to JD595,562 followed by the

Middle East Investment Bank, JD378,359.

Trading in the industrial sector focused on the Arab Pharmaceutical Manufacturing with a turnover amounting to JD265,302 followed by the Arab Potash Company, JD157,600 and Jordan Cement Factories Company, JD142,285.

Investors' attention in the services sector focused on the Arab International Investment Education with a turnover of JD131,483 followed by the Jordan Electric Power with a turnover amounting to JD66,961 and the National Portfolio Securities, JD20,733.

The activities in the insurance sector, the weakest among the four sectors, focused on the Jordan French Insurance with a turnover of JD37,586, the Arab Union International Insurance with a turnover amounting to JD17,253 and the United Insurance which received JD5,775 of the total trading.

Among the companies that drew the attention of the investors in the parallel market were the Century Investment Group, which won JD67,230, followed by the Jordan Marketing Company, JD133,950 and Middle East Pharmaceutical with a turnover amounting to JD85,484.

Out of the 95 firms that changed hands in the stock market, 15 companies recorded increase, 58 firms registered decrease while 22 companies witnessed no change.

Saudi Arabia, Jordan reach initial accord on product specifications

By Suha Ma'ayeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan has won initial approval from Saudi Arabia to accredit the Institution of Standards and Metrology (ISM) with the authority to issue certifications of conformity for products destined to Saudi Arabia, a Ministry of Trade official said recently.

The decision was taken at a meeting held between Industry and Trade Minister Hani Mulki and his Saudi counterpart, Osama Fakeeh, on the sidelines of the "Quality Conference" which Amman hosted last month.

At the meeting, Jordan asked for the formation of a technical committee to study the flow of Jordanian goods to the Saudi markets.

"There were some issues concerning the flow of Jordanian exports and Saudi imports between the two sides," said Samir Emreish, advisor at the ministry.

He pointed out that Saudi Arabia has accredited other companies across the world to make sure that exports comply to Saudi standards.

The company that inspects Jordanian exports to Saudi Arabia is based in Dubai, so when Jordan wants to export to Saudi Arabia, a representative from Dubai has to come to Jordan in order to submit the certification of conformity. Such a process costs a lot of money, time and effort.

Approval is only considered "initial" because a technical committee suggested the accreditation. It will become final after a protocol is signed by the Jordanian and Saudi trade ministries.

"The Saudis told us that the company based in Dubai has already assigned local inspectors in Jordan to help Jordanians export products to Saudi Arabia," said Dr. Emreish.

He said the Saudis pointed out some minor violations with regards to the Jordanian commodities entering Saudi markets, but indicated that any irregularities can be solved easily.

Salem Khewi, the ISM deputy director general said Jordan has submitted a draft proposal which entails harmonising Jordanian specifications with regards to the products to be exchanged between the two countries.

"The project aims to accredit the certifications of conformity from both of the Jordanian and Saudi standard institutions," said Mr. Khewi. He also added that the draft proposal is geared towards eliminating the technical barriers regarding the flow of commodities between the two countries and to accredit laboratories.

"There will also be a follow-up on training courses in both countries to upgrade Jordan's products to compete with other products that enter the Saudi market," Mr. Khewi concluded.

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Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	-	1.7883	0.8095	1.4800	142.43	1.5967	1743.90	1.9924	5.9247
DE Mark	0.5655	-	0.3445	0.5368	80.55	0.8218	886.85	1.1279	3.3638
GB Sterling	1.6407	2.9005	-	2.4260	233.76	2.4720	2862.00	3.2711	9.7288
CH Franc	0.6787	1.1837	0.4114	-	96.22	1.0172	1178.12	134.65	4.0040
JP Yen	0.0070	1.2411	0.4276	1.0387	-	1.0674	12.24	139.91	4.1613
CA Dollar	0.6637	1.2916	0.4225	1.0886	1.06	-	1270.80	1.4581	4.3285
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0134	0.3491	0.5848	1228.38	0.8832	-	11.42	3.3974
NL Guilder	0.5019	88.63	0.3054	74.21	71.38	0.7552	874.64	-	2.9724
FR Franc	0.1668	0.2981	0.1027	24.9515	24.01	0.2540	33.62	33.6200	-

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LBP	EGP
US Dollar	-	0.7090	3.7502	0.3770	3.6402	0.3064	3.6728	1508.00	3.4220
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	-	5.2894	0.5377	5.1343	0.4322	5.1804	2125.94	4.8265
Saudi Riyal	0.2667	0.1891	-	0.1005	0.97	0.0817	0.98	402.11	0.9125
Bahrain Dinar	2.55	1.6807	9.8477	-	9.66	0.8128	8.74	4000.11	9.0772
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1948	1.0302	1.0302	-	0.0842	1.01	414.26	0.9401
Kuwait Dinar	3.2635	2.3138	12.2388	12.2388	11.88	-	11.99	4821.35	0.9401
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1930	1.0210	1.0210	0.9911	0.0834	-	410.57	0.9317
Lebanese/1000	0.66	0.4702	2.4869	0.2800	2.4139	0.2032	2.4369	-	2.2892
Egyptian	0.2922	0.2072	1.0959	0.1102	1.0638	0.0896	1.0733	440.68	-

Energy				Mid-East Currencies				
Oil	Last	Previous		Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	JPY
Brent	0.00	0.00		SA Riyal	0.2667	0.4717	0.18257	38.046
W. Texas	14.09	14.16		AE Dirham	0.2723	0.4816	0.40327	38.7943
Bonny	0.00	0.00		KW Dinar	3.2635	8.7737	1.98965	483.225
Dubai	12.58	12.48		BH Dinar	0.3770	1.61734	3.92827	377.929
UL Gas	139.00	141.00		CY Pound	1.9167	3.357	1.167	2.835

Metal Prices			Libor Fixing				
Metal	Bid	Offer	Period	1-3	3-6	6-12	1-5
Gold (oz's)	290.4	290.9	Cncy	Month	Months	Months	Year
Silver (oz's)	5.84	5.87	USD	5.8683	5.8675	5.7600	5.8281
Platinum (oz's)	377	379	GBP	7.5889	7.7539	7.8125	7.8125
AL (3 Months)	1360	1363	JPY	0.8977	0.8983	0.8641	0.8680
CU (3 Months)	1724	1728	DEM	3.4888	3.5313	3.6250	3.8125
Zinc (3 Months)	1095	1096	FRF	3.5195	1.8945	2.0117	2.1250
Lead (3 Months)	556	559	CHF	1.8125	3.8664	3.6563	3.8438
Ni (3 Months)	4445	4455	ITL	5.0250	4.8715	4.8310	-

Main Equity Indices						
Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low
New York	DOW JONES	8921.39	6.43	0.07	8921.39	8914.96
New York	S&P 500	1126.82	1.71	0.15	1126.82	1125.21
London	FT-SE 100	5893.5	48.4	0.85	5908.3	5842.3
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	16201.6	43.51	0.27	16311.6	16190.1
Paris	CAC 40	4202.88	63.68	1.54	4202.88	4152.91
Frankfurt	OAX	5897.05	43.42	0.74	5897.25	5837.51

Energy			JOD Cross Rates		
Commodity	Last	Delivery	Currency	Buy	Sell
Coffee (c/lbs)	117.5	Spot	US Dollar	0.708	0.710
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1888	Spot	GB Sterling	1.1637	1.1695
Sugar (\$/ton)	260	Spot	DE Mark	0.3995	0.4015
Wheat (\$/ton)	0	Spot	CH Franc	0.4768	0.4792
Soya (c/lbs)	24.22	Spot	FR Franc	0.1192	0.1198
Tee (c/lbs)	125	Spot	JP Yen	0.497	0.4996
Barley (\$/bush)	0	Spot	NL Guilder	0.3543	0.3561
Rice (\$/ton)	415	Spot	IT Lira	0.0448	0.0468

* Sources: Central Bank of Jordan.

Kuwait, others ready for more oil output cuts

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait has said a third round of collective oil output cuts must be agreed if North Sea Brent crude failed to rise to \$17 a barrel by November.

OPEC (Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries) ministers are scheduled to meet in Vienna, Austria on

Nov. 25. "Unless Brent is \$17 in early November we (all producers) will have to start moving...we will have to cut production," Oil Minister Saud Nasser Al Sabah told reporters.

He said \$17 was his "break-point," adding that he would

personally get involved in a campaign aimed at cutting oil supplies to a glutted market if the improvement was not seen with the start of the winter season in the northern hemisphere.

Shortly afterwards, a Gulf source told Reuters in Dubai that OPEC heavyweight Saudi Arabia and other oil producers were willing to cut output further if needed "provided there is full adherence to the promised cuts."

Qatar also supported the move. "Qatar can cut further if other producers decide unanimously to cut further but I think the agreements reached earlier for two (rounds) of cuts should be given some time to have an

impact on the market," a senior Qatari official told Reuters in reaction to Sheikh Saud's comments in Kuwait.

North Sea dated Brent was trading Wednesday at around \$12.60 a barrel.

"You know me. I am inclined towards cuts. We have to cut the amount," said Sheikh Saud, who assumed his post in March. He has called OPEC's November accord in Indonesia to raise the ceiling a "mistake" which should not be repeated.

Key Arab Gulf states, including Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, have already cut their output twice this year in an attempt to restore world oil prices which are still close to their lowest level in 10 years.

Together with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait makes up an influential Arab Gulf bloc within the 11-member group.

Sheikh Saud has previously said that what mattered to Kuwait was price levels in the market rather than production.

"No way, of course we will have to cut," the Kuwait minister said when asked of OPEC's options if prices failed to recover from 10-year lows.

OPEC agreed at the Jakarta meeting to raise the overall ceiling by about 10 per cent to 27.5 million barrels per day (bpd) from Jan. 1 but decided on two rounds of cuts of a total 2.6 million bpd since to help boost prices.

Malaysia spells out priorities, blasts media

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — Malaysia's government spelled out its top economic priorities and launched a scathing attack on the media for its coverage of the Asian economic crisis.

A senior minister said Kuala Lumpur's chief aims were to stabilise the ringgit, build business confidence and attract foreign direct investment.

The general thrust of the various policy measures recently adopted by the government was to restore business confidence and turn the economy around, Minister for Special Functions Daim Zaiduddin said.

Mr. Zaiduddin told a seminar on the media's role in the economic crisis that the

impact of these measures may not be felt immediately since monetary and exchange rate policies often take six to 18 months to show results.

"However, Malaysia's macroeconomic prospects for 1998 and beyond is also dependent on external factors beyond our control, such as the health of the all-important Japanese economy," he added.

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THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams
TMSPuzzles@aol.com

ACROSS
1 Counterfeit
5 Olympian
9 Data display
14 Mrs. Dithers of "Blondie"
15 Seedy bar
16 Blooper
17 Against prof.
18 Gets an A
19 Give off
20 Meat cut
21 Swede's steed
23 Primp
25 One-and-only
28 For Peter's
29 Sappho's birthplace
33 Flat boats
36 Vigoda and Lincoln
39 Grow less
40 God of Islam
41 Magle of baseball
42 Chop into tiny bits
43 Yankee Berra
44 Wager
45 Donkeys
46 Goller's posture
48 Sale-lag disclaimer
50 Speak roughly
51 Blood fluid
52 Sadden
53 Hussein's cloth
57 Bondsman's outlay
63 Dunderheads
64 Destroy
65 Log
66 Classic song
67 Cinder ending?
68 Lead player
69 Abrupt transitions
70 Vertical surface
71 Posted

DOWN
1 Head skin
2 Peer recognition
3 Band-leader
4 Bangor beau
5 Dandig to residents

8 Puerto
7 Civil Rights martyr
8 Painter's base
9 Snicker
10 Jester's ship
11 "Rabbit"
12 Oafish
13 Art deco designer
22 Pipe bends
24 "The Face is
Familiar" poet
27 Facility
28 Alpine chasm
30 Prohibits
31 Formerly
32 Catches sight of
33 Comments
34 Blood mass
35 Gymnast
37 Step up to the plate
38 "Born Free" star
42 Flexible armor
44 Vulture's tool
47 Turning points

49 Of the backbones
51 Scolding woman
52 Prentiss or Abou
54 Fry lightly
55 La Scala location
56 On the qui vive
57 Golden calf, for example
58 Part in a play
59 "Paper Lion" star
60 Trademark swab
61 Murder

Peanuts

I'LL NEVER FORGET THE EXPRESSION ON THE OTHER ATTORNEY'S FACE...

HE SAID I HAD THIS BRAND-NEW YELLOW LEGAL PAD WITH LINES ON IT...

THERE'S A LOT OF JEALOUSY AMONG ATTORNEYS

Andy Capp

HE WANTS ANOTHER DRINK, RUSS, HE'S SHAKING HIS FINGERS

FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, F.O. RELAX

I'LL JUST GET HIM ANOTHER...

HE ISN'T SHAKING HIS FINGERS?

HE MIGHT HAVE A BLISTER

Mutt n' Jeff

I DON'T CARE WHO I MARRY NOW! ENCEE NONTHAVE ME!

I KNOW A GIRL WHO WILL HAVE ME!

YOU GO AROUND TO SEE HILL STREET? GO RIGHT A-POSTIVE GIRL AND TELL HER "OH YOU WANT TO GET LOST? WELL, I'LL TELL HER I GOT YOU! STRUTTY!

MUTT SENT ME! I WANT TO MARRY YOU! WHAT SAY?

WELL, THAT'S JUST FINE! AND WHAT ABOUT ME?

I'M A NEW RUSSEY! OH I ONLY WANT ONE!

MUTT, DID YOU SAY 25¢ OR 25¢?

THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen

GLASBERGEN

"Would you rather be married to an interesting person with stupid opinions or a dull person with no opinions?"

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Anglin

Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

RUSUY

SOPIE

DANGIE

CRAHNB

THROWN BY AN ANGRY PITCHER

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here:

Yesterday's Jumble: GRAVE VYING CASKET ARCAOE
Answer: What the cook gave his apprentice — "SAGE" ADVICE

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Bo Hamburger of Denmark answers reporters prior to the start of the 19th stage of the Tour de France cycling race between La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland, and Autun, eastern France, Friday, July 31 (AP Photo)

Tour de France TVM team withdraws

LA CHAUX-DE-FONDS, Switzerland (AP) — The five remaining members of the TVM team Friday withdrew from the scandal-tainted Tour de France with just three stages left.

The TVM squad members are to be interviewed by police in Reims on Monday in connection with ongoing inquiries into the illegal use of drugs by riders.

The five riders — Sergei Ivanov, Sergei Chirchakov, Steven de Jongh, Servais Knaven and Bart Voskamp — withdrew before the start of Friday's 19th stage from La Chaux-de-Fonds to Autun in France. A sixth TVM rider, Jansen Blijerens, pulled out of the Tour during Thursday's stage.

TVM team director Guido Van Calster issued a statement on behalf of the riders saying the TVM team had been exhausted by the events of recent weeks.

"All the riders on the

TVM team have decided not to take part in the 19th stage of the Tour de France," the statement said. "We are not mentally or physically capable of finishing the Tour. It was a decision taken by the riders alone."

Only 14 of the 21 teams that started the highest stage of the Tour now remain and only 87 riders — less than half the original field — set out on the 242km stage.

The Festina team were ejected from the Tour after the performance-enhancing drug EPO was found in a car driven by the team's physiotherapist.

Several members of the Festina team have subsequently admitted to using illegal drugs.

Rodolfo Massi, the former King of the Mountains leader, was meanwhile Friday morning released from police custody in Chambéry, along with ONCE team doctor Nicolas

Terrados.

Both had been interviewed by police since Wednesday night. Drugs had been found in Massi's room after a search on Wednesday night, prosecutors said.

Massi, who has denied taking drugs, initially refused to submit a test sample, but subsequently relented. The results, according to Lille's assistant public prosecutor Gerald Vinsonneau, will not be known until September.

Marc Madiot, sporting director of the La Française des Jeux team, was also interviewed by police on Thursday, but was later released.

The ONCE, Banesto, Kelme, Riso-Scotti and Vitaloni teams had all previously withdrawn from the Tour in protest at the tactics of police investigating the use of performance-enhancing drugs.



Overall leader Marco Pantani of Italy grimaces as he arrives for the start of the 19th stage of the Tour de France cycling race between La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland, and Autun, eastern France (AP Photo)

MLB RESULTS

American League		
Baltimore	6	Detroit 4
Kansas City	7	Minnesota 3
Oakland	6	Boston 5
Toronto	1	Texas 0
NY Yankees	3	Anaheim 0 (10 Innings)
Cleveland	9	Seattle 8 (17 Innings)
National League		
Florida	4	Houston 3
Montreal	12	San Francisco 6
Arizona	4	Chicago Cubs 0
Los Angeles	3	Philadelphia 1
San Diego	3	NY Mets 1 (10 Innings)
St. Louis	3	Milwaukee 2
Atlanta	13	Cincinnati 3

Basketball World Championships No Dream, No Team for U.S.

ATHENS (AP) — Maybe the Dream Team wasn't such a bad idea.

That's what USA Basketball must be thinking. And Donn Nelson, the Dallas Mavericks assistant who has worked with the Lithuanian national team for six years, agrees.

"All the international guys I've talked with are kind of disappointed they are not able to go against the best from the U.S.," Nelson said after Lithuania held on for an 84-82 win over the mix-and-match crew of castoffs and collegians the United States sent in place of NBA

stars to the World Basketball Championship.

The effort was there from the U.S. players. The talent wasn't.

Where a Kevin Garnett might have gone strong to the basket, Bill Edwards, who plays in Italy, had back-in-back jump shots blocked by Lithuanian center Eurelijus Zulkasas in the first half. Where a Grant Hill or a Vin Baker might have carried the U.S. offense, too many players missed too many shots in a key second-half scoreless stretch of nearly 5 minutes.

"They were a little better than we were," coach Rudy Tomjanovich said. "I'll go a bit further. They were better for most of the game than we were."

The United States (1-1) was still in position to advance to the second preliminary stage by beating South Korea Friday. The day's other pivotal games included Russia against Puerto Rico and Canada against Italy.

The 12 players chosen for the latest version of the Dream Team threatened to boycott the tournament because of the NBA labour

dispute — and USA Basketball dumped them.

While Tomjanovich has steadfastly refused to comment on the issue, Nelson didn't pull any punches when discussing whether the Dream Teamers should be in Athens.

"In my opinion, there's nothing more important than your country," he said, "and there's nothing more important than if your country asks your service in war or stepping up to the plate. There's no higher calling. They should be here."

Without them, the United States — a perennial power

in the sport — saw its 26-game winning streak in major international events end. That run dates to the 1990 worlds, when Yugoslavia beat a group of American college players en route to the title.

Yugoslavia looks likely to contend for the gold again.

The reigning European champions needed overtime, but got past Russia 82-74 Thursday to improve to 2-0. Greece, boosted by a near-sellout crowd at 18,000-seat Olympic arena, also stayed unbeaten with a 64-56 victory over Italy.

Australia stumble again

ATHENS (AFP) — Australia suffered their second shock defeat of the basketball World Championships on Thursday when Spain narrowly edged their encounter 77-76.

Hosts Greece outpointed Italy 64-56 but the United States were felled by Lithuania 84-82.

Canada had an easy enough time seeing off Senegal 70-57, but Yugoslavia had to work to beat Russia 82-74.

Argentina, conquerors of Australia on Wednesday, once again had cause to celebrate after stopping Nigeria 68-51. Brazil and South Korea proved a thriller with Brazil emerging victorious 76-73 while

Puerto Rico struggled off Japan 78-57.

Australia's defeat sets back further their ambitions to capture gold after their reverse at the Atlanta Olympics where they could only finish fourth.

Greece, spurred on by a partisan crowd, only pulled clear of Italy in the dying seconds of an ultra defensive encounter in send the partisan crowd off happy into the Athens night.

FIBA World Championship			
Results so far:			
Lithuania	97	South Korea	56
Russia	83	Japan	58
United States	83	Brazil	59
Yugoslavia	80	Puerto Rico	66
Spain	80	Nigeria	68
Italy	76	Senegal	66
Argentina	66	Australia	62
Greece	78	Canada	72
Puerto Rico	78	Japan	57
Brazil	76	South Korea	73
Lithuania	84	United States	82
Yugoslavia	82	Russia	74 OT
Argentina	68	Nigeria	51
Canada	70	Senegal	57
Greece	64	Italy	56
Spain	77	Australia	76

United to meet Kluivert next week

MANCHESTER (AFP) — Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson is set to break off from United's Scandinavian tour in a bid to persuade Dutch striker Patrick Kluivert to join the English Premiership giants.

Ferguson is preparing to fly to Italy early next week to meet with the player after he returns from holiday to AC Milan on Monday.

United and Milan have agreed to a nine million pound (\$15 million) move but Ferguson has yet to sort out personal terms with the striker, whose current wage demands would shatter United's strict salary structure.

Ferguson said he was hopeful of making more progress on his search for a striker next week, but he ruled out using Andy Cole as bait to lure Dwight Yorke from Aston Villa.

Ferguson said: "We are trying to do a deal when the boy (Kluivert) comes back from holiday on Monday."

"He is meeting Milan and thereafter we hope to be in touch with him and try to progress it from there."

"If you look at the history of players going to Milan from Holland it has not worked. He is a young player of 22, so I think all his best years will be ahead of him."

Of Cole's future, Ferguson added: "We are not offering Andy Cole to anyone. We are trying to do a straight cash deal. Villa have turned down our first offer and I don't know what has happened since then."

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & YANFANG HIRSH
Omar Sharif, Yanfang Hirsh, and
Omar Sharif, Yanfang Hirsh, and

HELP FROM THE ENEMY

North-South vulnerable. South dealer.

NORTH
♠ Q 4 2
♥ J 4 2
♦ J 9 8
♣ K 3 2

EAST
♠ J 7
♥ 10 7 6 3
♦ Q 10 7 6 2
♣ A 10 7 6 2

SOUTH
♠ K 4 3
♥ A K 8 5
♦ A 4 3
♣ A 8

The bidding:
SOUTH 1♣ WEST 1♦ NORTH 2♦ EAST 3♦
SOUTH 4♦ WEST 5♦ NORTH 6♦ EAST 7♦

Opening lead: Five of ♠

If a suit is good enough to bid, it should be good enough to lead. Failure to do so on this deal made declarer's life easier.

North-South were employing a forcing club structure, so South's first two bids showed a balanced hand of 17-20 points and North's double announced values, not a desire to penalize one diamond. Three no trumps was a normal contract.

After a diamond lead declarer would have had to work hard and guess everything right to score nine tricks, but West elected to lead a spade. Declarer who in hand with the king, cashed the ace of hearts, then led a low heart toward the jack.

In with the queen of hearts, West panicked with a low spade, taken by the table's queen. A clear picture of West's hand was beginning to emerge. The defender surely had four spades and probably only five diamonds, and had already shown up with two hearts. Therefore, West could not hold more than two clubs.

Declarer cashed the jack of hearts and working of clubs, reducing West to nothing but diamonds and spades. Now a spade from dummy presented West with two spade tricks, which were welcome, and the lead, which was not.

West returned a low diamond, leaving South with a guess. Was West's suit headed by a high honor and the ten or K? Declarer opted for the latter, inserted the table's jack and, when that held, nine tricks rolled in — two spades, three hearts and two in each minor.

World Junior Athletics Championships Barus wins 10,000 as bell tolls for Kipsang; China take women's 3000

ANNECY, France (AFP)

— Benson Barus won gold for Kenya in the 10,000 metres world junior championships here on Thursday but it was handed to him on a plate when compatriot Salim Kipsang stopped at the bell for the start of the final lap.

Kipsang, who was running in his first race outside Kenya, recovered well enough to still take silver with Ethiopian Alene Emere in third — giving the Kenyans a 4-3 lead over Ethiopia in the event, since the championships started in 1986.

"We were lapping a fellow at the time and I thought the bell was for him," Kipsang said.

"I didn't look at the board at all during the race, and it may be something to do with not having run outside Kenya before," Kipsang added.

A confused Barus ran on looking behind him to see where Kipsang had gone but fortunately his compatriot was so far ahead of Emere that he didn't lose out on silver as well.

The race favourite Said Berrimi of Morocco, who made the senior world final in Athens last year, dropped out with five and a half laps to go coming a disconsolate figure as he trudged across the infield looking down at his ankles.

In the women's 3,000 metres The Orient mastered the African challenge as Li Lin of China cautioned home to take the world title.

Lin, who posted the fastest ever time for a junior at 5,000 metres when she ran fourth in the senior championships though it was not ratified because there was no drugs test, blew away her African challengers.

Edinah Kiplagat of Kenya and Ethiopian Yimerfajit Taye with a lap to go.

The 18-year-old Lin was unstoppable as she cruised through the final lap while compatriot Lixin Lan faded badly being passed first by Kiplagat, who is the reigning junior cross country champion, and then Taye, who also took out the firing Kenyan in the finishing straight.

"I am very happy but not all that surprised by my win," Lin said.

Hungary's Zoltan Kovago left it to the very last throw to claim the world junior discus title leaving British hope Emeke Udechukwu a bitterly frustrated man.

Kovago, who had led the competition from the second throw to the fifth when Udechukwu seized the initiative with a mark of 57.99, unleashed a massive throw of 59.36 to take gold while compatriot Galor Male, who only qualified for the final with his last throw in the qualifiers, won bronze with 56.96.

"Of course I was afraid before my last throw as Udechukwu was the leader in the world this year, but it wasn't bad was it?" the 19-year-old nicknamed "Zoli" said.

For Udechukwu, son of Nigerian parents and who was educated at the top English public school Dulwich College, it was the reverse of last year's European Championships where he had clinched the title on the last throw.

"I fully expected to win and I'm not particularly pleased. If the positions of throwing had been reversed whereby I threw last I really think I could have won gold... I really didn't expect him to throw that distance," the 19-

year-old said.

The men's long jump went to Bulgaria's Petar Dachev, who is the senior indoor titleholder, with a jump of 8.14 metres, while French hope Yann Domenek failed to make the last three rounds outscoring a mere 7.11 metres.

Finland's Aki Heikkinen took the decathlon title rounding it off with victory in the 1500 metres, waving in celebration to the crowd and going out a lap of honour afterwards.

Heikkinen, who won with a total of 7476 points, pushed his opponents to the limit with both the second Thomas Poge of Germany and bronze medalist Jarkko Ojanen of Finland posting personal bests of 7332 and 7246 points respectively.

The men's 10 kilometre walk proved a real test of endurance in the sweltering heat illustrated by the world junior leader this year Xavier Moreno of Ecuador who finished eighth.

Russian Roman Ryskazin won the walk with China's Yundeng Liu in second and the Central American champion Mario Flores of Mexico in third.

"The standard of the race was extremely moderate, and I knew I would win as early as the 5 kilometre mark," a thoroughly satisfied Ryskazin said.

The bravery of the athletes was emphasised by Norwegian Erik Tysse who was sick on the track at the halfway mark but carried on to finish.

Eren Flores, who comes from one of the warmest climates in the world, admitted the heat had been too much.

"The heat was really intense and made the race very hard," he said.

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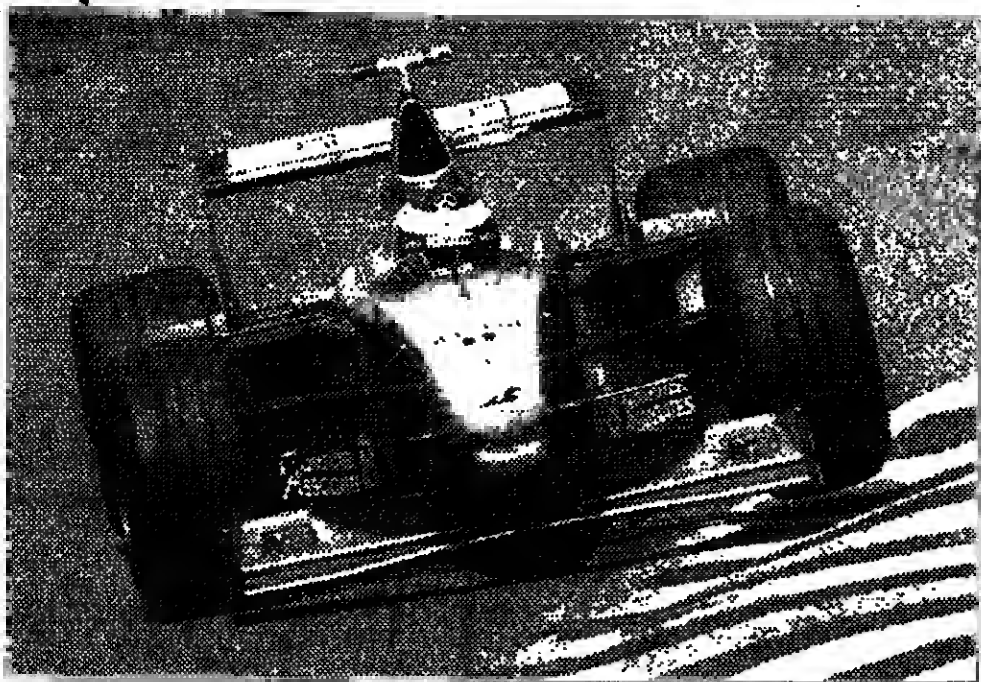
Hakkinen sets the pace

HOCKENHEIM, Germany (AFP) — World drivers' championship leader Mika Hakkinen of Finland produced a blistering late lap as he recorded the fastest practice time on Friday ahead of Sunday's German Grand Prix.

Hakkinen was fourth-fastest with just minutes of the final session left when he produced a sizzling lap of 1min 43.946sec around the 6.823km layout and underlined his current dominance.

The Finn, who leads the championship by eight points from Ferrari's two-time world champion Michael Schumacher of Germany, has an advantage of just over a 0.1sec over his McLaren-Mercedes teammate David Coulthard.

The 27-year-old Scot had dominated the morning session and led for much of the afternoon practice before being forced to settle for



Finland's Mika Hakkinen of team McLaren Mercedes in action during a free practice of the German F1 Grand Prix, July 31. The German Grand Prix will take place on Sunday August 2 (Reuters photo)

second-quickest.

But Coulthard, who trails Hakkinen by 30 points, will be confident of following up his fine second place in Austria last weekend in Sunday's race as he attempts to finish the season on a high.

Former world champion Damon Hill also conjured up a flying lap late in the session to take third place for Jordan as he enjoyed one

of his best sessions of the season.

Hill was under 0.4sec slower than Hakkinen but boosted his chances of scoring his first points of the campaign if he can maintain the form throughout the weekend.

Sauber driver Jean Alesi of France was fourth fastest, closely followed by local hero Schumacher, with fellow Ferrari driver Eddie

Irvine one place further back.

Schumacher slipped eight points adrift of Hakkinen in the title chase after finishing third in Austria last weekend and badly needs to beat the Finn this Sunday to keep the drivers' crown within sight.

Sunday's race will be over 45 laps, a total of 307.035km.

Kwan and Thompson star at Goodwill Games

NEW YORK (AFP) — Michelle Kwan and Jenny Thompson, American world champions looking forward to their next Olympic opportunity, flashed world-class form at the Goodwill Games here Thursday.

Thompson swam two of the fastest 100-metre butterfly efforts in history then won again on five minutes of rest to bring the United States a 65-57 dual meet victory over the World All-Stars.

Kwan received a perfect score from one judge in the final performance of the short program from her Nagano Olympic figure skating runner-up season, a routine to Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto Number Three.

"It felt really good," Kwan said. "People were cheering so loud it was hard to concentrate. I said to myself, 'OK, this is the last time you are going to do this so concentrate,' and I just enjoyed myself, let it go."

Kwan goes for a Goodwill Games title on Saturday, the same night the U.S. women's swimmers can claim gold in the dual meet team competition by beating Germany.

Thompson out-touched Slovakia's Martina Moravcova in a showdown of the world's two fastest female 100-metre freestylers.

Thompson, who edged Moravcova for the 100 freestyle world title in January at Perth, anchored the U.S. 4x100-metre freestyle relay to victory in 3 minutes and 45 seconds, 39/100s ahead of the global squad.

The taxing relay effort came against well-rested rivals only five minutes after Thompson had won the 100 butterfly in 58.72 seconds, the seventh-fastest time ever clocked in the event.

"The last five meters I felt ... all slow motion, a blurry haze, you can't figure out what's going on," Thompson said of her relay finish. "I was just dead. Somehow I made it to the wall. Luckily I was there first."

Thompson also had reason to be proud of her butterfly leg in the opening 4x100 medley relay. Her 58.33-second effort was the fourth-best butterfly relay leg in history.

"It's hard to go as fast as I would like to go with so many swimmers but I'm doing my best and I feel good about my 100 butterfly time," she said.

The U.S. swim women, who led 58-57 before the seven-point all-or-nothing final relay, can also win gold Saturday by beating Germany in their round-robin dual meet. The Germans beat China 80-42 Thursday.

Moravcova's 55.58-second final leg was the fastest of the closing relay, but not enough to overcome the body-length lead Thompson was given by teammates Richelle Fox, Sylvia Beneknyei and Cristina Teuscher.

Thompson, who owns five Olympic relay gold medals, spent 20 minutes in the pool after the finish. "I couldn't get out," she said. "I had to stay in it. I'm just exhausted. I'm really glad we have the day off tomorrow."

Thompson and Teuscher are the only women to win six times in two days of competition. Thompson's 100 butterfly was the second-best of the year and her career, trailing only her 58.46 world title effort at Perth.

Atlanta Olympic 100m and 200m breaststroke champion Penny Heyns of South Africa won both for the world team, taking the 100 breaststroke in 1:08.14. She shaved 22-hundredths of a second off her prior 1998 world best on Tuesday but was 1.12 seconds off her world mark from Atlanta.

"The stroke felt hard tonight," Heyns said. "Tonight is my fourth 100m and my fifth 200m swims and perhaps I underestimated the fatigue factor."

In boxing semi-finals, top-ranked 81kg amateur Israel Alvarez of Cuba ripped Russia's Yevgeni Mukanenko 18-2 and Cuban 1996 Olympic silver medalist Juan Hernandez ripped American Darrell Wilson 12-1 at 71kg.

U.S. boxers won five of 10 bouts, the biggest upset coming at 63.5kg when Ricardo Williams won 12-5 over Russia's Paata Gvasalija, the world runner-up last year.

Brazil's World No. 1 women's beach volleyball duo of Adriana Behar and Shelda Bede rose to 2-0, beating Australia's Pauline Munser and Kerri Pottharst 15-9.

World ice dance champions Anjelika Krylova and Oleg Ovsianikov of Russia extended their lead by winning the short program.

Seles reaches semis, Williams rallies to win

STANFORD, California (AP) — Despite being bothered by a change of nine time zones and about 40 degrees (22 degrees Celsius), Monica Seles became the first player to reach the semifinals of the Bank of the West tournament Thursday night.

Seles had six aces and never lost her serve in the 6-3, 6-1 win over Anne-Gaëlle Sidot of France, but said she still is feeling the effects of last weekend's Federation Cup matches in Spain and the flight to California.

"I still feel very lethargic, everything hurts in my body," said Seles, who was treated for dehydration after her first-round victory Wednesday night and said her back was sore after Thursday's quarterfinal win.

"I never did this before. I think it's too much, my body is telling me that," she said. "I can't go to sleep. I think my body's still confused what time zone I'm on."

Venus Williams, seeded third in the \$150,000 tournament, rallied to reach the quarterfinals with a 4-6, 6-1, 6-0 victory over Corina Morariu, who was one of Seles' teammates on the U.S. Fed Cup team in Spain.

"It's been tough for all of us," Morariu said. "I think we've all gotten a little tired during our matches here."

Fifth-seeded Natasha Zvereva and No. 7 Elena Likhovtseva also advanced to the quarterfinals.

The U.S. Fed Cup team lost in the semifinals to Spain last weekend on clay courts in Madrid. The matches were played in 100-degree (38-degree Celsius) heat, and the Americans expended lots of psychological energy during the trip.

"It was just such an emotional few days there, and it's so hard to come back and play as an individual," Seles said. "It took some adjusting — food, time change, weather. We were playing in 105 degrees and here it's freezing at night."

Seles, who won the Bank of the West in 1990 and 1992 and is seeded second this year, uses the event as part of her buildup for the U.S. Open later this summer. But she's afraid fatigue may cut into her preparations.

"If I feel like this," she said, "I don't think I can play that many weeks in a row."



Monica Seles

Rafter, Agassi reach L.A. quarters

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Top seed Pat Rafter survived a second-set lapse Thursday to beat Martin Damm 6-3, 5-7, 6-1 and reach the quarterfinals of the ATP Tour event here.

Rafter, who defends his U.S. Open title in a month, said the knee pain that had him worried around the time of the French Open and Wimbledon, seemed to have been conquered.

"It's so much easier to move around the court," said the 25-year-old Australian, who has won two titles this year but slipped from a career-high second in the world to fifth.

"I thought I played pretty well," he said. "I probably got a little defensive on the early changes I had in the second set. Then he raised his game and didn't give me any more."

The second-round victory gave Rafter a quarter-final clash with American Justin Gimelstob.

Rafter has won both of their previous meetings, the last with a 7-5 third set at Philadelphia last year.

"It's going to be tough," Rafter predicted. "He's a pretty intense son of a guy. Our last match was very tough. But I'm playing pretty

well. I won't think too much about it, just go out and play my game."

Rafter's compatriot Sandon Stolle, a lucky loser who replaced injured fourth-seed Thomas Enqvist in the main draw, ousted another Aussie, Andrew Ilie, 6-3, 7-6 (8/6) to reach the quarterfinals.

Stolle will face fifth-seeded American Andre Agassi, who beat compatriot Jan-Michael Gambill 6-4, 6-4.

In their only previous meeting, Agassi dismantled Stolle 6-0, 6-0 in the first round at Scottsdale in 1993.

"It was probably my worst match of my career," Stolle said. "I'll leave it at that. I don't want to talk about it."

Agassi called that result "a freak situation."

But Stolle will have his work cut out against a player who captured his third title of the year in Washington last week.

Agassi looked sharp

against the hard-hitting Gambill, who had beaten him in their last meeting at Indian Wells in March. "I wouldn't call it a grudge match," Agassi said.

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Sudan's FM, rebel deputy chief to head peace talks

ADDIS ABABA (AFP) — Delegations at Sudanese peace talks here next week will be headed by Foreign Minister Mustapha Osman Ismail and Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) Deputy Chairman Salva Kiir, sources said Friday.

The talks on ending the 15-year-old civil war between the largely animist and Christian south and the Islamic junta in Khartoum will take place in the midst

of a devastating famine affecting more than 2.5 million Sudanese.

The Tuesday-to-Thursday talks will "start from where we left off in Nairobi," where the last round of peace talks was held on May 4-6, SPLA spokesman Pagan Amum told AFP in Nairobi.

Those talks ended inconclusively, with the government delegation declaring them a success and the

SPLA branding them a failure.

The two sides agreed then to hold a referendum on "unity or outright secession" for the south, but the fighting is continuing as the famine worsens.

Other members of the government delegation at the talks were will include Interior Security Minister Kutbei Mahdi, Administration of Territorial Unity Minister

Ahmad Ibrahim Al Tahir, Labour Minister Wagni Lokodo, and former rebel Rick Machar, who is now assistant president, Arab diplomatic sources said.

The SPLA's nine-strong delegation will include the rebel's governor for the southern Kordofan region, Yusuf Kuwa, and its governor for the southern Blue Nile region, Malik Agar, Mr. Amum said.

AJU to probe lashing sentences of two Yemeni journalists

CAIRO (AFP) — The Arab Journalists' Union (AJU) is to investigate the 1997 sentencing of two Yemeni journalists to 80 lashes of the whip each, the union said Friday.

Yemeni courts sentenced Abdullah Saad, editor-in-chief of the Islamic opposition paper Al Shura, and his brother Abdel Jabbar to 80 lashes each in May 1997 for publishing articles judged hostile to a leader of the

Islamic party Al Islah.

The sentence has not been carried out, and the two men have filed an appeal.

The union's investigation was announced in a statement at the end of a meeting of the AJU's general secretariat in Alexandria, northern Egypt.

The meeting centred on "freedom of the press and the strong pressure put on Arab journalists, who have been arrested, imprisoned

and whipped in several Arab countries," the statement said.

The AJU said it was working "against restrictions on freedom of expression and opinion."

The investigation into the Yemeni sentences will be headed by AJU Secretary General Salaheddin Hafez, as well as representatives of the Arab Organisation of Human Rights and the Arab lawyers' union.

U.N. team seeks answers at Algerian massacre site

SIDI KHLIL (R) — "Did you try to follow the tracks of the attackers?" asked a U.N. panel member of an army officer at the site of one of Algeria's latest massacres.

"Of course," he answered. "But let me explain the scope of the territory. The area is vast... extremely mountainous, lots of ridges, steep valleys."

"It's extremely difficult to track individuals because the terrorists' tactics is to gather for an attack and disperse afterwards." "But when did the army arrive?" interrupted Simone Veil, the French former president of the European Parliament.

"Fifteen minutes after midnight," the officer replied.

Survivors of the massacre at Sidi Khlil in Tlemcen province, 440 kilometres west of Algiers, in which 12 people were killed, had told the panel earlier that the attack occurred at 11.50 p.m. on Saturday.

"The attackers fled after the army arrived at the scene. Otherwise, more would have been killed," an elderly survivor said.

The exchange overheard by some foreign journalists during a briefing at a village tent Thursday, gave a first insight into the way the panel is conducting its fact-finding mission in the violence-racked North African country.

Human rights activists at home and abroad have criticised the army for not responding quickly enough to rebel attacks.

The survivors told the six-member team created by U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan that the rebels burned down three houses, killing 12 people, including six children and three women. They also kidnapped five women.

The panel, led by former Portuguese President Mario Soares, spent nearly two hours gathering information by talking to the survivors and the military officers.

"Did the attackers have any contact with the villagers before? Did they ever ask for assistance?" asked former Prime Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabarti, repeating a question he had posed to the survivors earlier.

"One of their goals is to capture weapons and ammunition," the officer replied. He added that the authorities had armed 38 men of Sidi Khlil's population of 300 to defend themselves against Muslim rebels blamed by the government for the massacres.

Thursday's visit was the third field trip by the panel since it arrived on its unprecedented fact-finding mission in Algiers nine days ago.



SADEQ'S WORKS OF ART: Models display oriental fashion in the ancient amphitheatre of Jerash during the 17th Jerash Art and Music Festival. The fashion show entitled 'An Oriental Dream' was on Wednesday a festive showcase of the works of Hana' Sadeq, a famous designer who creates, through the merging of traditional and modern styles, accompanied with jewellery and theatre decoration, a sight for sore eyes (Photo by Youssef 'Allan)

Douglas: A messenger of peace

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan has enlisted Hollywood film star Michael Douglas as a "messenger of peace" to promote U.N. causes around the world. Douglas, told a news conference here Thursday that he planned to use his celebrity to call for the elimination of nuclear weapons and non-proliferation of small arms. He said he became interested in the nuclear issue after starring in "The China Syndrome." Douglas also said he was "deeply embarrassed about our debt to the United Nations as a U.S. citizen."

First Asian actor to make it in U.S.

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Chow-Yun Fat, looked to as the first Asian action adventure star trying to make it in mainstream films in the United States, knows he's being watched. "I'm glad I'm the first one to take the bullet," smiles Chow, the 42-year-old Hong Kong performer who came from soap operas there and earned his way one of Asia's most recognisable stars. His first co-starring attempt with Academy Award winning Mira Sorvino "The Replacement Killers," didn't do too well at the U.S. box office.

Sang Lan may meet DiCaprio

NEW YORK (AFP) — Paralyzed Chinese gymnast Sang Lan may have her wish granted to meet "Titanic" heartthrob Leonardo DiCaprio, media reports said Thursday. "We read about her wish in the press, and he told me he was very concerned and wanted to arrange something," Cindy Guagenil, DiCaprio's press secretary, told the New York Post. Sang, 17, suffered severe spinal cord damage after landing on her head during a practice vault session July 21 before competing in a championship event at the Goodwill Games here.

An outrageous scene

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Some of the actors in "There's Something About Mary" couldn't believe that they were doing some of the outrageous things they were asked to do in the raunchy romantic comedy. Ben Stiller says he remembers sitting next to a fat man in a cot ready to do a crude scene in the farce and thinking, "what the heck am I doing here?" The team that brought "Dumb & Dumber" to the screen is testing the limits with the latest film, to the point that many newspapers are hesitant to even describe a scene, out of fear of offending the readers.

The pickle jar lesbians split up

LONDON (AFP) — A British lesbian couple who sparked controversy when they used a pickle jar and a syringe to produce two babies have split up, several British newspapers have reported. Dawn Whiting and Lisa Dawson, who inseminated each other with sperm from different donors, are now believed to be living apart. In October 1996, they were wedded at a "marriage ceremony" performed in a pub by a member of a Christian organisation.

Iran's judiciary slams return of paper under new name

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran's judiciary chief Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi Friday branded as "illegal" the return under a new name of a banned moderate newspaper which supports reformist President Mohammad Khatami.

"The publication of a previously forbidden newspaper under a new name is illegal, and we are asking the culture ministry to take action before

someone else does," Mr. Yazdi said during the weekly Muslim prayers at Tehran University.

Iran's press court last week upheld a ruling to close down Jameh newspaper for publishing "lies" and "disrupting public order."

Jameh first rolled off the press in February and became a symbol of press freedom as championed in the Islamic Republic by Mr. Khatami, a

moderate cleric.

The new paper, named Toos, employs the same editorial team as Jameh and began publishing the day after the press court's decision.

Mr. Yazdi denounced the "parasitic proliferation" of newspapers and magazines. "The Islamic people of Iran will not tolerate insults and attacks against their beliefs and the Shiite clergy," he said.

Hizbollah chief reelected

BEIRUT (AFP) — Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, the soft-spoken secretary general of the Lebanese Shiite Muslim Hizbollah, has been reelected for a third three-year term, a Hizbollah spokesman said Friday.

Sheikh Nasrallah was reinstated in an election on Wednesday that required an amendment of Hizbollah internal regulations which prevent the reelection of the secretary general for three consecutive terms, he told AFP.

Sheikh Nasrallah ran unopposed in the election.

The elections also brought back to office six of the seven former members of Hizbollah's consultative council, the Majlis Shoura Al Qarat.

which is the highest Hizbollah ruling body, he said.

A new member, Hajj Mohees Shukr, was elected instead of Hizbollah MP Abdullah Kassir, the spokesman said.

Sheikh Nasrallah was born on Aug. 31, 1960, in Beirut. In 1976, he travelled to the Iraqi city of Najaf where he studied Islamic theology, but had to return home two years later after problems with Iraqi authorities.

In 1979, he joined the Shiite Amal movement, but moved to Hizbollah at its creation during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

The bearded sheikh was named secretary general in 1992 after former Hizbollah

Chief Sheikh Abbas Musawi was killed in an Israeli air strike against his convoy in southern Lebanon.

He is married and has two daughters and three sons, including his eldest Hadi who died at the age of 18 during an anti-Israeli guerrilla operation in southern Lebanon in September 1997.

Hadi's body was returned during a large exchange of prisoners and bodies of slain guerrillas between Lebanon and Israel in June.

Hizbollah spearheads the guerrilla war to force Israel out of southern Lebanon where the Jewish state has maintained since 1985 a "security zone" to protect its northern territories.

Israel to delay Ethiopian fighter jet repairs

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel will delay upgrades of Ethiopian fighter jets to avoid influencing the outcome of Addis Ababa's violent border dispute with Eritrea, an Israeli official said on Friday.

"The planes, if they are renovated, will be delivered only in another year on condition that the dispute ends," said the official, who spoke on condition he was not identified.

"If the dispute continues, the planes will not be delivered," the official said.

Israel's Ha'aretz newspaper reported the delay affected 11

Ethiopian MiG-21 jet fighters and that the postponement came after Eritrea expressed concern the upgrades would affect the balance of forces in the conflict.

Ethiopia and Eritrea, former Horn of Africa allies, fought a bloody ground and air war between May 6 and June 11 over the disputed border territory of Badme and Sheraro.

Israel, which has defence and commercial ties with both countries, has expressed concern with the fighting which claimed hundreds of lives.

Israel maintains a base on

Eritrea's Dahlak Islands in the Red Sea where it has facilities to supply submarines and a monitoring station to eavesdrop on Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Jane's Defence Weekly reported last month.

Jane's reported Israel also maintains a base in mainland Eritrea in the Mabel Agar mountains near the border with Sudan to eavesdrop on the Khartoum government.

Israel has longstanding defence ties with Ethiopia. Jane's said Israel's Mossad spy service maintains a large station in Addis Ababa.

Outspoken Greek foreign minister ruffles feathers abroad, but is praised at home

By Patrick Quinn
Associated Press

ATHENS — Theodoros Pangalos is a diplomat — a most undiplomatic one. Since taking his post two years ago, his verbal blasts have ruffled officials from Turkey to Washington.

But to many Greeks, who share the impression that their country is unfairly kicked around by bigger nations, the foreign minister's bare-knuckles style strikes just the right chord.

"[Pangalos] many times cuts through what can easily be described as the hull of diplomacy, hypocrisy and expedience," said Mario Evriviades, a political analyst with Athens' Institute of International Relations. "In

this sense Pangalos does have an appeal to the Greek public." His latest barrage was aimed at U.S. President Bill Clinton, whom he called a "liar" for reneging on pre-election promises to make the divided island of Cyprus an American foreign policy priority.

The comments, which touched off a tit-for-tat exchange with Washington, went straight to the heart of Greek perceptions that the world's only remaining superpower has been siding with Turkey in its disputes with Greece.

"Your help, your friendship — we have had enough of them — stop working for our good. We have seen this good. Thank you very much, we have had

enough," Mr. Pangalos said, referring to U.S. initiatives in the region.

"One thing is certain," the Athens daily Ta Nea wrote in an editorial. "That in this case, as in others, the Greek foreign minister expressed exactly what the citizens of our country feel." In 1993, Mr. Pangalos, as European affairs minister, described Germany a "bestial force with a child's brain." Last year, he used the words "the bandit, the murderer and the rapist" to describe Turkish officials.

Turkey's foreign minister, Ismail Cem, returned the compliment, calling Mr. Pangalos a "psychopath." Greeks have for years suffered from an inferiority complex when it comes to foreign policy. It stems from more than a century of frustration with various foreign powers that have meddled in Greek politics — from the Balkan and Greek-Turkish wars earlier this century, to the Greek civil war in the 1940s, to the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974 following an Athens-backed coup on the island.

Cyprus has been divided into Greek- and Turkish-speaking sectors since the Turkish occupation of its northern third. Turkey keeps about 35,000 troops in the north, where a breakaway Turkish Cypriot state is recognised only by Ankara.

A series of U.S.-led efforts to solve the 24-year division of Cyprus have failed because of Turkish Cypriot refusals to negotiate unless their breakaway state is recognised by the international community.

Some political analysts believe Mr. Pangalos' remarks may be partly linked to a growing fear that Washington could someday lean in favour of recognising northern Cyprus.

The 49-year-old Mr. Pangalos is well-known for his dry wit and sheer presence — rivaling the size of another political "heavyweight," German Chancellor Helmut Kohl. A professor of economics, Mr. Pangalos studied in Athens and Paris. He was elected to parliament when the Socialists first came to power in 1981 and has held various cabinet posts since

then, but has specialised in foreign affairs.

He is the grandson of one of Greece's most quirky military dictators — a man said to have complained most about the short length of women's skirts during the 1920s.

Various Greek leaders have over the years sought to take advantage of the deep anti-American sentiments. The late socialist Premier Andreas Papandreu, who lived for many years in the United States, made a career out of America bashing and coined the slogan "Greece for the Greeks." Mr. Pangalos, a politician who rose to prominence under Mr. Papandreu, seems to have learned that lesson well.

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